

# Holy Week: A Short History

J. GORDON DAVIES

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ECUMENICAL STUDIES IN WORSHIP

No. II

# HOLY WEEK: A SHORT HISTORY

by

J. G. DAVIES, M.A., D.D.

*Edward Cadbury Professor of Theology and Director of the Institute for the Study of Worship and Religious Architecture in the University of Birmingham*



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## PREFACE

ONE OF THE most noticeable features of the contemporary liturgical renaissance is the recovery of the Church's Year within those Christian communions that had discarded it at the Reformation. So in 1935 there was published *Prayers for the Christian Year*, with the authority of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. In the preface Dr. Millar Patrick makes four points: first, the reasons for the original cessation of the observance of the Calendar are no longer valid; second, the principal festivals being now secular holidays, it is the Church's duty to impress their primary religious significance upon the public mind; third, in thus celebrating the fundamental certainties held in common by all Christians, the Church of Scotland is witnessing to its belief in the doctrines of the Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints; and, fourth, such commemorations serve an evangelic purpose in that they ensure the proclamation of the basic truths of the faith, "not by preaching only, but, on these occasions, by the whole cast and substance of the Church's worship".

The Church of Scotland has not been alone in this work of restoring the Christian Year. *The Call to Worship*, by D. T. Patterson, first edition 1930, of Baptist provenance, contains "Orders of Service for the Christian Year". *A Manual for Ministers*, first published in 1936, which is a collection of material for Congregationalists, contains "Orders of Service for Special Seasons", while the title of J. M. Todd's *Prayers and Services for Christian Festivals*, 1951, is self-explanatory. *A Book of Services and Prayers*, 1959, also Congregationalist in origin, includes both prayers for the Christian Year and tables of lessons for the different seasons and holy days. *The Presbyterian Service Book*, for England and Wales, 1948, contains a section entitled "Prayers and Services for the Christian Year". Finally, to go a little further afield but not to extend the list indefinitely, *The Book of Common Order of the United Church of Canada*, which reached a fourth edition in 1958, provides a table of lessons and prayers from Advent to All Saints' Day.

Within those Churches that have retained the ecclesiastical calendar, the contemporary movement is not so much one of restoration as of either reformation, in the case of Roman Catholics, or of enrichment in

the case of Lutherans and Anglicans. But restoration, reformation and enrichment all find a common meeting ground in the observance of Holy Week which has always been the crown of the Christian Year. The purpose of this study is to provide an historical basis for these different approaches to the Calendar, by setting out the development of Holy Week throughout the ages. The method adopted is that of sinking shafts, as it were, into the tunnel of history at certain keypoints in order to concentrate attention upon and illuminate the main stages of that evolution. So, in the first chapter, our concern is with the origin and purpose of Holy Week in the period of the early Church before the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325. In the second chapter we move into the fourth century and focus attention, in the main, upon Jerusalem. Next we progress to the Middle Ages and direct ourselves exclusively to Salisbury, as illustrative and typical of a great advance. Finally the twentieth century, and in particular the Roman reforms and increased Anglican observance, is reviewed.

The substance of this book was originally delivered in lecture form at Cuddesdon College, Oxford, at the invitation of the Rev. R. A. K. Runcie, the Principal, during Holy Week, 1962, and I should like to express my thanks for his generous hospitality. At the same time I would point out that this occasion explains the form of the second half of the final chapter. In that concluding section I have ventured to look forward into the future and to make certain suggestions for a series of revised observances during Holy Week, against the background of present Anglican practice. I do so because it is my conviction that liturgical revision, of which there is so much talk within the Church of England today, must ultimately embrace not only the Gospel Sacraments and the Occasional Services, but the whole worshipping life of the Church, including its calendar with Holy Week as its climax. This slight essay in revision may perhaps help a little to further this aim, while at the same time being of interest to all Christians, no matter what their ecclesiastical allegiance, who are concerned to sanctify time by reintroducing the Church's Year as a means whereby our congregations may learn to live with Christ.

## I

## THE ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF HOLY WEEK

TO UNDERSTAND THE origin and purpose of Holy Week it is above all necessary to appreciate the revolution which took place in the Christian attitude to time in the early centuries of the Church's history. This attitude in the period after the council of Nicaea, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say after the conversion of Constantine, differed fundamentally from that which obtained in the preceding three hundred years. Because the detailed observance of Holy Week was the outcome of this changed conception, it requires careful definition, and its character may be illustrated from the history of early Christian art, and in particular by contrasting the catacomb paintings of the third century with the church mosaics of the succeeding ones, since these reflect, as all art does, the beliefs of the community in which and for which they were produced.

The early frescoes in the Roman catacombs are exclusively symbolic. A restricted number of subjects, derived largely from the *ordo commendationis animae*—a prayer said at the bedside of the dying<sup>1</sup>—is represented time and again: Noah riding the flood in the ark, Jonah being swallowed by the whale and lying beneath the gourd, Daniel in the lions' den and the Three Children in the fiery furnace. These paintings are moreover notable for their complete lack of realism; there is an entire absence of interest in every-day details. The ark is no more than a rectangular box with open lid; Jonah has no individual traits and the Three Children appear to be identical triplets.

When we turn to the mosaics of the post-Nicene era, we find ourselves in a totally different world. Let us take as an example the mosaic which adorns the apse of S. Pudenziana at Rome (402-17). In the centre Christ is enthroned with the apostles on either side, St. Paul to His immediate right and St. Peter to His immediate left. The figures are individualized; they are recognizably different the one from the

<sup>1</sup> This prayer consists of the petition that God will deliver the soul of the departed, as He has delivered "Enoch and Elijah from the common death, Noah from the deluge, etc., etc."

other. It is true that symbolism is still present, both in the two women, behind the apostles, who stand for the Church of the Gentiles and for the Church of the Circumcision, and in the emblems of the evangelists which float in the sky, but the whole scene is remarkable for its topographical setting. Christ is seated in front of Calvary in the Constantinian foundation at Jerusalem, and behind Golgotha with the cross are depicted the various buildings erected in the holy city; thus above Christ's right hand is the round church of the Anastasis or Resurrection and to its left the Martyrium.

Here is evidence of a revolution; the symbolic art of the third century has come to an end, and its place has been taken by an iconography which is primarily factual and historical. The same process of change may be exemplified from the successive representations of Christ. Throughout the early centuries a debate continued about the appearance of the Saviour. There were those who maintained that He was uncomely, and those who declared Him to have been handsome, but the concern of both parties, in the ante-Nicene period, was doctrinal and was not related to physiognomy. Indeed before the fourth century there was little or no attempt to individualize Christ, and He appears on the monuments as the Good Shepherd in the nondescript form of a contemporary Roman youth. It was only after the Peace of the Church that interest was aroused in His personal physique from a representational point of view, and the desire to supply the *lacuna* led to the development of such legends as that of Abgar<sup>1</sup> and, by the sixth century, there were being exhibited portraits believed to be from life.

The nature of the revolution with which we are concerned should now be apparent; it was a revolution from symbolism to realism, from a lack of interest in time and every-day life to a keen interest in the historical. How is this to be explained? It is not primarily a question of style, pre-Nicene impressionism being contrasted with post-Nicene realism, frescoes in dimly-lit corridors with mosaics in imposing buildings. It is primarily a question of a transformed attitude, which the undoubtedly change in style faithfully serves and reflects.

The exclusively symbolic character of Christian art before Constantine has been emphasized by almost every writer on the subject for the past hundred years, but the theories advanced to explain why this par-

<sup>1</sup> Abgar, king of Edessa, is said to have corresponded with Christ (Eusebius, *H.E.*, i, 13); according to a later form of the legend, Jesus sent him a handkerchief miraculously imprinted with a picture of His face; cf. the development of the Veronica legend.

ticular method was adopted fail to carry conviction. There are those who contend that the beginnings of pictorial art are always symbolic, but however true this statement may be it cannot be applied to the paintings in the catacombs, which are no new creation, having been executed in the style of contemporary classical art. Others argue that the popularity of the allegorical method of Biblical interpretation led to the adoption of symbolism as its counterpart in the visual arts. Baldly stated in this fashion, it is evident that this is a logical *non sequitur*. However much the prevailing scriptural exegesis may have predisposed the artist to indirect representation, there is no inevitable causal relationship between them, nor does this theory explain the absence of all interest in the characters portrayed as historical personages.

It is further maintained by some that the Church was at first influenced by the Jewish attitude to art, that therefore realism, which might be considered as contravening the second commandment, was avoided and symbolism accepted as a suitable compromise. But the whole conception of the Hebraic view of the pictorial representation of living beings needs to be revised. Although the commandment against graven images was interpreted by some as forbidding all representation, its obvious intention was to prohibit the making of images destined to receive worship instead of God Himself. The canonization of the accounts of the cherubim in the ark,<sup>1</sup> of the bulls in Solomon's temple,<sup>2</sup> of the lions around his throne,<sup>3</sup> and of the creatures in Ezekiel's vision,<sup>4</sup> indicates that later generations found in them nothing to offend their feelings. Nor was the demolition of the eagle over the Temple gates, recorded by Josephus, the outcome of any iconoclastic movement; rather the Zealots' action was prompted by their hatred of the emblem of Roman power.<sup>5</sup> Hence Rabbi Gamaliel could affirm that "what is treated as a god is forbidden, but what is not treated as a god is permitted".<sup>6</sup> This is the justification of the sea-horses on the seven-branched candlestick, as it is shown on the arch of Titus, of the mosaics which paved the floors of Palestinian synagogues and of the wall paintings at Dura-Europos. "Pictorial art," in the words of E. L. Sukenik, "had its ups and downs in Jewish history, a period of greater laxity being followed by a reaction."<sup>7</sup> So far then from the Church being subjected to any Hebraic anti-artistic tendencies, apart from

<sup>1</sup> Exod. 25: 18 f.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings 7: 25-9.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Chron. 9: 18 f.

<sup>4</sup> 41: 18 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *De bello judaico*, 1, 33, 2 f.

<sup>6</sup> Mishnah, *Abodah Zarah*, 3: 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece*, 1934, p. 64.

general agreement about the representation of the divine, it was free to devise subjects as and how it liked, encouraged if anything by Jewish example.

Again it is suggested that the observance of the *disciplina arcana* involved the presentation of Christian truths in a symbolic, i.e. a disguised, form. It must be admitted that baptism and the eucharist could not have been figured at this early period in any other way, but this theory does not explain the entire absence of the historical element from pre-Nicene iconography nor does it account, any more than the other theses, for the deliberate rejection of realism in all but a few isolated *genre* pictures.

The key to the character of early Christian art lies, I believe, in the recognition that it was the product of a world-denying faith; it was the outcome of the tension between the present age and the age to come, of the eschatological crisis in which the Church came into being. It is not necessary, in order to make this point clear, to go into the niceties of New Testament exegesis and discuss the relative merits of the futuristic, realized and inaugurated eschatological interpretations. It is sufficient merely to draw attention to the conviction of the early Christians that they were living "at the end of the times".<sup>1</sup> So St. Paul affirms that Christians have been delivered "out of this present evil world",<sup>2</sup> "out of the power of darkness, and translated . . . into the kingdom of the Son";<sup>3</sup> hence their "citizenship is in heaven"<sup>4</sup> and, in the words of the author to the Hebrews, they have tasted "the powers of the world to come".<sup>5</sup>

This conviction, that in some sense the eschaton had broken into history, was not given up with the end of the Apostolic Age, and so, according to Ignatius of Antioch, "these are the last times".<sup>6</sup> Christians thus lived in the hope of a final and possibly imminent consummation, and hence, according to Justin Martyr, their "thoughts are not fixed on the present".<sup>7</sup> They believed, in Tertullian's phrase, "in things to come as though they already were".<sup>8</sup> They were in the world, but not of it;<sup>9</sup> mindful of their baptismal vows, their one desire was to be taken out of it.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, they had no interest in public affairs,<sup>11</sup> and one day was the same as another, since "he who remembers that he has re-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter 1: 20.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. 1: 4.

<sup>3</sup> Col. 1: 13.

<sup>4</sup> Phil. 3: 20.

<sup>5</sup> 6: 5.

<sup>6</sup> ad Eph., 11.

<sup>7</sup> Apol., I: 11.

<sup>8</sup> Apol., 20.

<sup>9</sup> Tertullian, *ad Mart.*, 11; Cyprian, *Ep.*, 21: 1.

<sup>10</sup> Tertullian, *ad Uxorem*, 1: 5.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., *Apol.*, 38.

nounced the world knows no day of worldly appointment, neither does he who hopes for eternity from God calculate the seasons of earth any more".<sup>1</sup> As Israel of old, so the Church remained a people apart, obedient to the government but hostile to imperial culture and having no share in the life of secular society. The individual Christian was "a foreigner in this world, a citizen of Jerusalem, the city above";<sup>2</sup> for him the immediate task was to detach himself from the existing order of things to prepare for what was to come. One consequence of this eschatological attitude was a complete lack of interest in all history.<sup>3</sup> Here lies, at least in part, the explanation of the character of Christian art before Constantine. When it is viewed in this light, there is no longer cause for surprise that it was exclusively symbolic; rather there is cause for wonder that there was any art at all. The fact that despite this rejection of the world, intensified by the world's rejection of the Church in the persecutions, the early Christians yet adorned their cemeteries testifies both to their creative impulse and to their great love for those who rest in Christ.

The abandonment of this anti-historical attitude could take place only with the cessation of hostility between the Church and secular society, and this indeed was the immediate result of the conversion of Constantine. Nevertheless the radical transformation of outlook which then took place had been in part anticipated by Origen, who thus prepared the way for the change when the circumstances were propitious.

Origen was essentially a Hellenist, and he broke away from the concrete realism of Christian eschatology and conceived the kingdom of God as the realm of spiritual reality situated in the supersensuous and intelligible world. He thus merged the eschatological other-worldliness of Jesus with the philosophical other-worldliness of Plato. Salvation, for Origen, consisted in liberation, not from the world as such, but from the bondage of matter in which the soul is imprisoned. He thus obscured the contrast between the kingdom of this world and that of the world to come, between the kingdom of God as a present reality and the kingdoms of the world as belonging to a past and doomed order, and he was prepared to admit the possibility of a general conversion of the Empire. His teaching found its fulfilment in the empire of Constantine which Eusebius, under the influence of Origen, declared

<sup>1</sup> Cyprian, *de Lapsis*, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Tertullian, *de Corona*, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Hence it was not until after the conversion of Constantine that any attempt was made to write a Church history, viz. that of Eusebius of Caesarea.

to be the Messianic kingdom, with Constantine as the new David and the church of the Holy Sepulchre as the new Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> There was no room left for the old Jewish and Christian social dualism; the kingdoms of this world had become the kingdoms of God and His Christ.<sup>2</sup>

Such an attitude was not immediately accepted in the West, and the Donatist movement in Africa was in part a protest against any compromise with the world. Augustine himself, while combating the schism, shared its eschatological outlook and expressed it in his doctrine of the two cities, but by equating the City of God with the realm of transcendent being and the earthly reign of Christ with the Church militant, he lent his support to the Origenist position, for to both "the ideal of the kingdom of God acquired a metaphysical form, and became identified with the ultimate timeless reality of spiritual being".<sup>3</sup> Augustine, however, differed from Origen in recognizing the importance of the temporal process which finds its fulfilment in eternity. It was he who both analysed and defined the significance of events in time, a significance which was implicit in Christianity, based as it is on a sacred history, but which Augustine was the first to formulate clearly. He thus synthetized the many ideas which impinged upon the Church once it had come to terms with the Empire, and the result of this compromise was a renewed interest among Christians in history. At the same time there was a great development of church building, which was decorated lavishly in order to rival the splendours of the defeated paganism.<sup>4</sup> This led to a change in the character of the figured works, for the paintings which had suited a small funeral chapel were not adaptable to great basilicas. It became necessary to aggrandize the people, to multiply them, in order to establish a due proportion between their dimensions and those of the edifice. The transformed attitude to the world and to history enabled the artists to increase the number of their subjects, by drawing on the Biblical record, and they represented them with a greater freedom and a closer attention to realistic detail than previously. Before the fourth century there had been little attempt at individual characterization; now the effort was made to establish types, and different attributes were assigned to the majestic beings who people the mosaics. Hence arose the post-Constantinian church art,

<sup>1</sup> *Vita Const.*, III, 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Oratio Triscen.*, 2-10.

<sup>3</sup> *A Monument to St. Augustine*, 1930, p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> Eusebius, *H.E.*, x, 3.

which was at once both historical and monumental, and reached its climax in the magnificent creations of the Byzantine period.

This new style did not immediately spring into being as a finished entity. In the East, in those districts where Christianity was predominant, and where contact with the imperial government and pagan secular society was not close, the tension between the world and the Church was less acute. Consequently, before it became possible in the West, Eastern artists were already feeling their way towards a dramatic realism, and the frescoes in the Christian chapel at Dura-Europos are evidence of an interest in narrative subjects and of the beginning of a development from the symbolic towards the historical a century before the Constantinian settlement.<sup>1</sup> These paintings are transitional, primitive symbolism and increased realism being combined into a single iconographical scheme. Thus the Good Shepherd, who seals his flock in baptism, is represented next to Adam and Eve, symbolizing didactically: "as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous."<sup>2</sup> Yet the three Marys at the tomb are depicted with a remarkable attention to detail, carrying torches and bowls full of spices, their hair accurately portraying the fashion of the early third century.<sup>3</sup> In the years which followed, this indigenous Syrian style gradually penetrated into the West, where it was accepted as the primitive sense of crisis passed away, being replaced by a futuristic apocalyptic and by an emphasis on the Gospel as the record of events in past history.

The origin of the complex observance of Holy Week is to be sought in this changed attitude, as it has been illustrated and defined, and its purpose too may now be made explicit. The decline of the eschatological emphasis and the laying of stress on the historical process of redemption allowed the Church's Calendar to develop into a series of historical commemorations. This development was the more encouraged by Church leaders because it provided a practical means of presenting the facts of the Gospel to the large number of nominal Christians who flocked into the Church in the wake of Constantine. Here was a method whereby the life of Christ could be set before the

<sup>1</sup> It may be argued that the tension in Dura itself must have been acute, witness the pagan temples and synagogue; but the art of the Christian chapel was not necessarily created there; probably it was produced under the influence of other more important Christian centres.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 5: 19.

<sup>3</sup> *The Excavation at Dura-Europos, Fifth Series*, ed. M. I. Rostovtzeff, 1934, p. 275.

worshippers week by week, year in, year out. Through the liturgical cycle, the birth, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus were brought home to the semi-pagan masses. Time itself was to be sanctified. The purpose of Holy Week was identical with that of the whole liturgical year: it was to enable the worshippers to live with Christ. Through the Holy Week rites, the individual was to enter Jerusalem with Christ on Palm Sunday, be present at the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, watch at the foot of the cross on Good Friday, mourn by the tomb on Holy Saturday and rejoice at the presence of the Lord on the day of resurrection. This is not to say that Holy Week suddenly sprang into being in the fourth century; there was a Church's Calendar before then, although it was of extreme simplicity and its character, as may be supposed from what has been said above, was the reflection of the primitive eschatological understanding of the liturgy.

Anyone who examines the pre-Nicene Calendar for the first time cannot fail to remark the absence of many festivals which today appear to be among the principal features of the Church's year. There is no Christmas Day—it was first introduced at Rome in the early decades of the fourth century.<sup>1</sup> There is no Ascension Day—it too emerged in the fourth century. In the West there is no feast of the Epiphany, although in the East it may go back to the second century.<sup>2</sup> Neither Lent nor Advent is in evidence; Holy Week itself is lacking, and there is no word of Palm Sunday or Maundy Thursday.

The central core of the pre-Nicene Calendar was Sunday, the Lord's Day, the first day of the week. Its characteristic feature was the celebration of the Eucharist whereby "ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come".<sup>3</sup> It was the day of Christ's resurrection, and therefore, in the words of the *Epistle to Barnabas*, it marked "the beginning of another world".<sup>4</sup> Its predominant note was one of joy, thanksgiving and victory. It was the "periodical manifestation in time of the reality of eternal redemption in Christ . . . it is eschatological in its significance, as representing the 'world to come' supervening upon this world and time".<sup>5</sup> Its eschatological character, as contrasted with an historical interpretation, is well brought out by Ignatius, who draws a distinction between the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Sunday. "Those

<sup>1</sup> A. A. McArthur, *The Evolution of the Christian Year*, 1953, pp. 31–57.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 58–69.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 11: 26.

<sup>4</sup> Cap. 15.

<sup>5</sup> G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 1945, pp. 336 f.

who lived by the ancient practices came to a new hope, by no longer keeping the Sabbath, but by living according to the Lord's day, on which also our life arose through Him and His death."<sup>1</sup> This "living after the Lord's day" signifies not merely the observance of it, as the Jews observe the Sabbath, but the appropriation of all that it means for a Christian who rises with Christ's resurrection as he dies in Christ's death. Thus Sunday showed forth salvation as already achieved "in Christ", and it was a sign of the inbreaking of the eternal order of God.

In addition to this weekly festival, there were two annual festivals, the Pascha and Pentecost. The former, the Christian Passover, was a unitive festival, proclaiming both the cross and the resurrection. Like Sunday, it was a feast of redemption which had been effected by the passion and resurrection of Christ, viewed as a single act. It is true that the Paschal celebration was preceded by a fast extending over the Friday and the Saturday, but there is no suggestion, in the pre-Nicene era, of two separate commemorations, one of the passion on Good Friday, characterized by mourning, and the other of the resurrection on Easter Day, of which the main feature was joy. It was a single commemoration of Christ's victory, through death and rising to life again, and of the deliverance of the believer through faith in Him and baptism into His name.

Pentecost was the period of fifty days, succeeding the resurrection, and was one of universal rejoicing; "we spend our time", says Tertullian, "in all exultation".<sup>2</sup> There could be no fasting nor even kneeling, since these were both signs of penitence. "As every Lord's Day was a commemoration of the glory of the Divine Kingdom in the Resurrection of Christ, so the fifty days of Pentecost echoed to the same trumpet note of victory."<sup>3</sup> This period culminated in the day of Pentecost, or Whitsunday as we are accustomed to term it, which recalled the giving of the Spirit to the Church, of Him who is "an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of His glory".<sup>4</sup>

Turn now to the fourth century and the atmosphere is changed. The Pascha is divided; the cross and resurrection are no longer seen as two aspects of one event; Good Friday detaches itself and is an historical memorial of the crucifixion; Easter Day alone proclaims the resurrection. Ascension Day brings to mind the withdrawal of Christ to the heavens, Whitsunday His sending down of the Spirit to the upper room

<sup>1</sup> *ad Mag.*, 9.

<sup>2</sup> *de Jejun.* 14.

<sup>3</sup> McArthur, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. 1: 14.

in Jerusalem. We should expect that this historicization of originally eschatological festivals would be revealed by the sermons delivered on these occasions, and this is indeed the case.

Melito of Sardis was an Asian, active in the reign of Marcus Aurelius and dying about the year 190. His Paschal Homily is based upon a contrast between the Passover of the Old Israel and the Christian Pascha. This is the background of the following passage, which illustrates his unhistorical interpretation of the festival.

Today things precious are become worthless, since those things which are truly precious are revealed. Once the sacrifice of the sheep was held in honour; now it is worthless because of the life of the Lord; honoured was the death of the sheep, but now of no account because of the Lord's salvation; precious was the blood of the sheep, now of no worth because of the Spirit of the Lord; precious was the dumb lamb, but now of no worth because of the unblemished Son; precious the temple here below, now nothing worth because of the Christ above; precious the new inheritance, now of no value because of encompassing grace. For the glory of God is not established in one place nor in a paltry form, but his grace is poured out to all the ends of the world, and there almighty God hath taken up his dwelling; through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for the ages. *Amen.*<sup>1</sup>

An anonymous paschal homily of the fourth century, based upon a tractate by Hippolytus, will serve to indicate the historical interest that was by then coming to the fore.

After his resurrection he was first seen by the women, for just as woman first brought sin into the world, so she first carries the news of life. That is why they also heard this sacred word: "Women, rejoice" that the original sorrow might be swallowed up by the joy of the resurrection. Then remaining for a little time and confirming his holy resurrection, he gave to those who did not believe proofs of his resurrection from the dead with his body.<sup>2</sup>

There is no need to insist further on the difference of attitude exemplified by these two preachers; the one is concerned to proclaim salvation as an accomplished fact in which we may participate here and now; the other reproduces the details of the Gospel record as events in past history which we must not forget. Nor is there need to repeat that Holy Week was the product of this changed attitude which became pervasive in the fourth century; but if this account of the origins of

<sup>1</sup> *The Homily on the Passion by Melito Bishop of Sardis, Studies and Documents*, XII, ed. Campbell Bonner, 1940, pp. 172 f.

<sup>2</sup> P. Nautin, *Homélies Pascales*, I, 1950, p. 186.

Holy Week is to be complete further attention must be given to the pre-Nicene Pascha since this existing observance provided the material upon which the changed attitude was to work.

We have already noted that the Paschal celebration was preceded by a fast, and although this normally extended over two days—the Friday and the Saturday—there were differences from one place to another. According to Irenaeus, writing c. 190, “some think they ought to fast a single day, but others two, others again even more. And in the opinion of others, the ‘day’ amounts to forty continuous hours. And this variety of observance did not originate in our time, but much further back, in the times of those before us”.<sup>1</sup> Dionysius provides evidence that at the time when he became bishop of Alexandria in 247 the fast could be protracted for six days, although he also intimates that not everyone observed it and that the Friday and the Saturday were still the two days of abstinence recognized as essential by all.<sup>2</sup> In Athanasius’ first extant *Festal Letter* of 329, the “holy fast” is described as lasting six days, and this indicates the continuation of the custom in Alexandria into the fourth century.

This six-day fast was not confined to Egypt; the Syriac *Didascalia*, c. 250, contains the injunction: “Fast then from the second day of the week, six days wholly, until the night after the Sabbath”,<sup>3</sup> i.e. from what we should now call Monday in Holy Week until the night of Holy Saturday. Nevertheless, even in the *Didascalia* the primary emphasis is still laid on the Friday and the Saturday; hence it declares: “Therefore you shall fast in the days of the Pascha from the tenth, which is the second day of the week; and you shall sustain yourselves with bread and salt and water only, at the ninth hour, until the fifth day of the week. But on the Friday and on the Sabbath fast wholly, and taste nothing.”<sup>4</sup>

There was thus in several centres in the Middle East before Nicaea a six-day fast preceding the Paschal celebration. Historicize this period, i.e. connect each day with events in the Gospel, and Holy Week as it appears in Jerusalem at the end of the fourth century has been created. Moreover just as Origen prepared the way for the reconciliation with time, consequent upon the conversion of Constantine, so certain Christian centres were in advance of others in their readiness to histori-

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, *H.E.*, v, 24: 12 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. ad Basil.*, P.G., 10: 1275 f.

<sup>3</sup> R. H. Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum*, 1929, p. 183.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

cize. The main purpose of the letter of Dionysius to Basilides, quoted above, was to answer a question concerning the hour of Christ's rising from the dead, because there were those who thought that this should determine the time at which they ceased to fast and began to celebrate the Pascha; they seek, says Dionysius, "an exact account of the specific hour, or half-hour, or quarter of an hour, at which it is proper to begin their rejoicing over our Lord's rising from the dead".<sup>1</sup> The historical outlook is here evident over half a century before the conversion of Constantine.

In the *Didascalia* this is carried even further, and we are informed that Judas agreed to betray Jesus on the Monday, that Jesus ate the Last Supper and was arrested on the Tuesday evening, was kept in custody at the house of Caiaphas on the Wednesday, brought to Pilate on the Thursday, examined before him, condemned and executed on the Friday, rested in the sepulchre on the Saturday and rose on the first day of the week.<sup>2</sup> Each day is thus linked with a Gospel event and a reason is thereby supplied for the fast; so in connexion with the Friday we are instructed: "Fast then on the Friday, because thereon the People killed themselves in crucifying our Saviour; and on the Sabbath also, because it is the sleep of our Lord."<sup>3</sup> This chronology is so peculiar that it has been thought to be an original and accurate reminiscence of the day by day course of events in the final week of Jesus' life,<sup>4</sup> but it is perhaps rather to be interpreted as a means of justifying the extension of the fast from the normal two to six days by the thesis that the Passion actually began on Monday.<sup>5</sup> However we explain it—and it is worthy of note that this document emanates from the same area as the Dura frescos which we have already seen anticipated the realistic art of the fourth century—here is historicization of the kind that was eventually to make Holy Week a normal feature of the Church's Calendar.<sup>6</sup>

A further influence is also to be observed, viz. that of the daily hours of prayer. By the opening decades of the third century, the hours of prayer, inherited from Judaism and based upon the time-divisions of the Graeco-Roman day, had come to be associated with events in the

<sup>1</sup> P.G., 10: 1274.

<sup>2</sup> Connolly, *op. cit.*, pp. 181 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>4</sup> A. Jaubert, *La date de la cène*, 1957, pp. 79–81.

<sup>5</sup> McArthur, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

<sup>6</sup> Historicization is also apparent in the connecting of the two weekly stations or fast days, Wednesday and Friday, the one with the betrayal, the other with the crucifixion (Victorinus of Pettau, *de fab. mundi*, 3 f.).

lives of the Apostles. This was particularly noticeable in North Africa where Tertullian connects the third hour with the descent of the Spirit, the sixth with Peter praying on the house top, and the ninth with the prayer of Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate.<sup>1</sup> Hippolytus, however, links the hours with the passion of Jesus, and moreover he interweaves two cycles of commemoration.<sup>2</sup> According to the first cycle: at cock-crow Jesus was condemned by the Sanhedrin; at the third hour He was crucified; at the sixth darkness covered the earth; at the ninth His side was pierced and He descended to the place of the departed spirits. The second cycle recalls not the events of a single twenty-four hours but the three days from death to resurrection. So from cock-crow to the sixth hour is the first day; from the sixth to the ninth is one night, represented by the darkness; from the ninth to sunset is the second day; from sunset onwards is the second night, and cock-crow recalls the resurrection on the third day.<sup>3</sup> Hippolytus' work was very popular in the Middle East, parts of it being incorporated into a number of Church Orders,<sup>4</sup> and it is not fanciful to suppose that his way of connecting the passion and resurrection of Christ with each twenty-four hour period should have led to the commemoration of the same events, spread over several days, at the appropriate season of the year, i.e. at the Pascha.

The *Didascalia* also requires that these days be marked not only by fasting but by vigils; its testimony is not free from ambiguity, but it would appear to refer to vigils on the Friday and Saturday nights. These vigils are to include prayers and intercessions, reading of the prophets and psalms.<sup>5</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea also indicates that services were held during the period of the Pascha, since he refers to "the vigils of the great festival, the spiritual exercises then observed, the hymns it is our wont to recite",<sup>6</sup> and elsewhere he mentions "the last paschal vigil".<sup>7</sup>

This last vigil, on what we now call Holy Saturday, also included the rites of Christian initiation. So Tertullian informs us that the Pascha "offers the more regular occasion for baptism, when also the Lord's passion into which we were baptized is consummated".<sup>8</sup> The fullest account of what took place is preserved in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus which describes the ritual at Rome in the early decades of

<sup>1</sup> *de Orat.*, 25.

<sup>2</sup> M. H. Shepherd, *The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse*, 1960, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> *Ap. Tradit.*, xxxvi.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Const. Ap.*, VIII, 34.

<sup>5</sup> Connolly, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

<sup>6</sup> *H.E.*, ii, 17: 22.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vi, 34.

<sup>8</sup> *de Bapt.*, 19.

the third century. The preparation of the catechumens began to reach its climax on the Thursday before Easter Day, when those who were to be baptized had to wash and cleanse themselves. On the Friday and Saturday, they fasted and then came to the bishop, who exorcized them by the laying on of hands and by breathing on their faces. The vigil, with readings from the Scriptures, then began. At cock-crow, the bishop blessed the water in the font, and consecrated the oils of thanksgiving and exorcism. The candidates next renounced Satan and were anointed with the oil of exorcism. Baptism, accompanied by an expression of belief, followed, after which the candidates were anointed with the oil of thanksgiving and the bishop laid his hands upon them and administered a final unction. The Paschal Mass then began during which the newly baptized made their offerings and also partook of milk and honey, symbols of entrance into the Promised Land.<sup>1</sup> Two elements in this complex should be noted in view of the later history of Holy Week; these are the blessing of the oils and of the font. The former became the basis of the *Missa Chrismatis*, which took place in the West on Maundy Thursday, the latter was the *Benedictio Fontis* which remained a feature of the Paschal Vigil.

We may now sum up the results of our brief investigation into the origins and purpose of Holy Week:

1. Its origin lies in the ante-Nicene Pascha. This was normally preceded by a two-day fast which in the course of time became extended in certain areas of the Middle East to six days.
2. The de-eschatologizing of the primitive and uncomplex calendar and the historicization of the festivals was the product of a changed outlook consequent upon the reconciliation between Christianity and the State which followed the conversion of Constantine.
3. The purpose of the new calendar, including Holy Week, was to set the facts of the Gospel before the many nominal Christians who then flocked into the Church.

One other factor, of which mention has not hitherto been made, was influential in creating Holy Week out of the six-day Paschal fast and that was topography—for the explication of this we must turn to Jerusalem as we examine in the next chapter the fourth-century development.

<sup>1</sup> *Capp. xx-xxiii.*

## II

### HOLY WEEK IN THE FOURTH CENTURY

IN THE YEAR 377 Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, published his *Panarion* and in an appendix, usually known as the *Expositio Fidei*, he included a general account of the pre-Paschal fast. This is how he describes it:

Throughout the six days of the Pascha all the peoples persevere in strict abstinence—I mean they then partake of bread and salt and water towards evening. But the zealous fast completely for two, three or four days together, and some the whole week until cock-crow at dawn on Easter Day. They observe vigils on the six days, and again they hold services the same six days, and throughout the whole of Lent, from three in the afternoon until evening. But in some cases they have vigils on Thursday evening until dawn on Friday and on Saturday evening until dawn on Easter Day. And in some places the Eucharist is celebrated on Thursday at 3 p.m. and so the people are dismissed and continue in the same strict abstinence. But in other places the Eucharist is not celebrated except at dawn on Easter Day, when they are dismissed about cock-crow on the day and festival of the resurrection—the great day of the Pascha—as has been enjoined.<sup>1</sup>

There is a certain resemblance between this account by Epiphanius and that given by Irenaeus in the second century, in that both provide evidence of a variety of methods of observing the pre-Paschal fast; there is nevertheless a development noticeable in the centuries that divide these two writers.

1. Epiphanius refers to Lent. The development of this season requires a study in itself and only its main aspects need be noted here.<sup>2</sup> The origin of Lent is to be found in the scheme devised to prepare each year candidates for baptism on Holy Saturday night. The instruction of these catechumens was spread over a period of six weeks and the six-day pre-Paschal fast was extended to correspond with this. At the same

<sup>1</sup> *Cap. xxii.* This is not a literal translation, modern equivalents being used, e.g. instead of "the fifth day" I have given "Thursday".

<sup>2</sup> McArthur, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-39.

## HOLY WEEK: A SHORT HISTORY

time the fast was intended to apply not only to the candidates but to the Church as a whole, this being a means of asserting the claims of Christian self-renunciation upon the lives of the nominal believers who formed a large proportion of the "converts" in the fourth century. The observance of a forty-day Lent, related to the forty days of Jesus in the wilderness, is apparent in Egypt before 330, and a letter of Athanasius to Serapion of Thmuis, written from Rome in 340, refers to "all the world" fasting during these weeks.<sup>1</sup> Holy Week itself was included within the forty days, but the Monday in Holy Week constituted a new beginning, that of the fast of the Pascha. Thus Holy Week is not so much the last week in Lent; rather Lent is the extension backwards of Holy Week.

2. Epiphanius indicates that the entire six days were everywhere observed as days of strict abstinence, although the devotion of some led them to fast even more rigorously.

3. Epiphanius provides evidence of an increase in the number of acts of public worship in that on each of the six days there is a service (the word used is *Synaxis*) from 3 p.m. until evening. In addition to these, certain centres also have vigils every evening, but some observe them only on the Thursday and Saturday nights.

4. Epiphanius records that the Eucharist is not celebrated on these days, although in some areas it has become customary to hold one on the Thursday, starting at 3 p.m.

Although Epiphanius' description does represent an advance upon what had taken place in the ante-Nicene period, we are still some way from Holy Week as it is now commonly understood. For this final development in the East we must turn to the record of Egeria.<sup>2</sup> Egeria, a nun from Galicia in the north-west corner of Spain, was a pilgrim to the Holy Land in the closing years of the fourth century. After a tour of the sacred sites, including Jerusalem, she eventually reached Constantinople, whence she wrote an account of what she had done and seen for the benefit of her sister nuns in Spain, her intention being to go on to Ephesus before finally setting out for home. Egeria's letter is divided into two parts: the first is by way of being a travel diary, giving details of her itinerary; the second is a full account of the various services which took place throughout the year "day by day in the holy

<sup>1</sup> P.G., 26: 1412.

<sup>2</sup> For this form of the name see A. Lambert, "Egeria. Notes critiques sur la tradition de son nom et celle de l'*Itinerarium*", *Revue Mabillon*, XXVI, 1936, pp. 71-94; "Egeria, soeur de Galla", *ibid.*, XXVII, 1937, pp. 1-42.

places".<sup>1</sup> Included in this is a report of everything that happened during what Egeria terms "the Paschal Week", which, she says, "they call here the Great Week".<sup>2</sup> To appreciate her narrative it is necessary to have a clear picture of the several churches in Jerusalem which played such an important part in the observances.

Most conspicuous among these buildings were those enshrining Golgotha and the tomb of Christ, which were erected on the directions of Constantine (Fig. 1). His motive apparently was to make the Holy Land a centre of pilgrimage and a means of fostering the unity of Christendom, menaced, as it was, by the Arian heresy.<sup>3</sup> Eusebius, in his life of the Emperor, has left a description of this architectural complex, and although some of the details of his account are ambiguous, the general disposition is not in doubt.<sup>4</sup> The principal buildings were set out axially in a long line running from east to west. A great entrance at the former extremity led from the street into an atrium, a forecourt surrounded by colonnades. Out of this opened a five-aisled basilica, later called the Martyrium; it was floored with marble slabs of various colours and had its panelled ceiling overlaid with gold. The sanctuary end of the Martyrium was somewhat unusual and probably consisted of a dome, borne on twelve columns, half of it projecting beyond the west wall and half of it inside. This marked the place where the Empress Helena had discovered what was believed to be the true cross.<sup>5</sup> Beyond this building, still moving in a direct line westward, was a second atrium, also surrounded by colonnades, which contained, a little to one side, a small hill, the site of the crucifixion. The space between the Martyrium and this elevation is called *post crucem* by Egeria, while the space between it and the final feature, the Anastasis, is termed *ante crucem*. The Anastasis, or church of the resurrection, contained the tomb; at first this may have been an enclosure open to the sky,<sup>6</sup> but it soon took the form of a rotunda with a wooden dome. To these four elements—atrium, Martyrium, Golgotha and Anastasis—must be added the baptistery, which in all probability was close to the

<sup>1</sup> xxiv, 1.

<sup>2</sup> xxx, 1.

<sup>3</sup> W. Telfer, "Constantine's Holy Land Plan", *Studia Patristica*, I, 1957, pp. 696–700.

<sup>4</sup> iii, 34–9.

<sup>5</sup> J. G. Davies, "Eusebius' Description of the Martyrium at Jerusalem", *American Journal of Archaeology*, LXI, 1957, pp. 171–3.

<sup>6</sup> E. Dyggve, *Gravkirken i Jerusalem, Konstantinske Problemer i ny belysning*, 1941; E. Wistrand, *Konstantins Kirche am heiligen Grab in Jerusalem*, 1952.

Anastasis, on its south side, and comprised three chambers, the central one of which housed the font.<sup>1</sup>

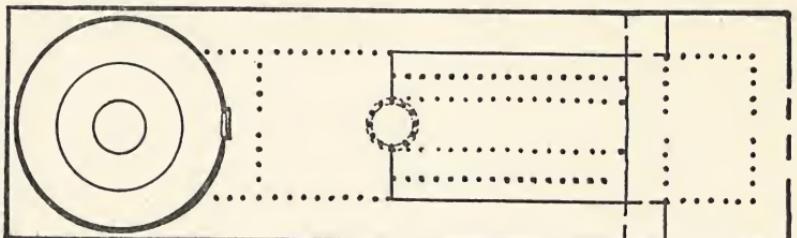


FIG. 1

When these buildings were dedicated in 335, the new bishop of Jerusalem, Maximus, who was then enthroned, moved his seat to the Martyrium from a previously existing church. This was originally a small building, on the supposed site of the house with the upper room where the Apostles were gathered when the Spirit descended. Known as the church of the Apostles or simply as Sion, it was forthwith enlarged, the alterations being completed c. 340, by which time it had been

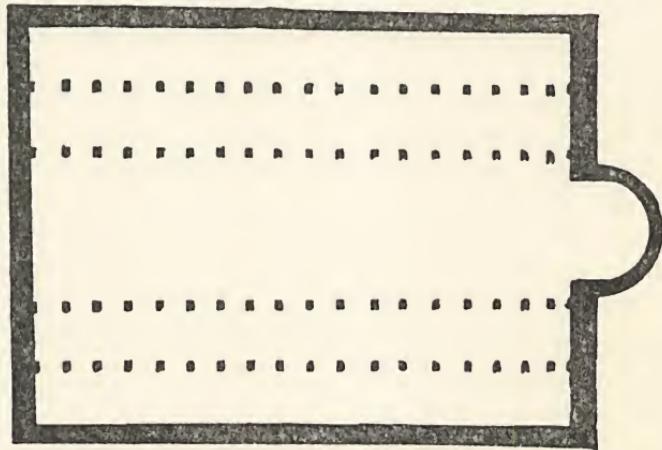


FIG. 2

transformed into a five-aisled basilica (Fig. 2). It is depicted on the Madaba mosaic as a large building with a saddle-back roof; it has

<sup>1</sup> H. Vincent and F.-M. Abel, *Jérusalem*, II, 1914, pp. 89–300; A. Parrot, *Golgotha et Saint-Sépulchre*, 1955; W. Telfer, *Cyril of Jerusalem and Nemesius of Remesiana*, 1955, pp. 43–54.

double entrance doors beneath a triangular gable. Within it was preserved the column of the Flagellation.<sup>1</sup>

Moving out of the city, across the Kedron valley, we come to Gethsemane on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives. Here, between 380 and 390, the emperor Theodosius founded a church to mark the site of Jesus' agony in the garden. Excavated in 1920, this building was found to have been some sixty feet long and some forty-eight feet wide; it was preceded by an atrium. Inside there were three aisles and, in front of the sanctuary, a rock projected up through the floor, this being the place where Jesus prayed to His Father (Fig. 3).<sup>2</sup>

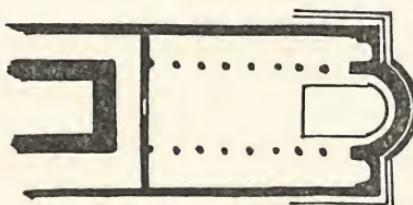


FIG. 3

Further up the mount there was the Eleona, founded by the empress Helena and the product of considerable engineering skill, having been

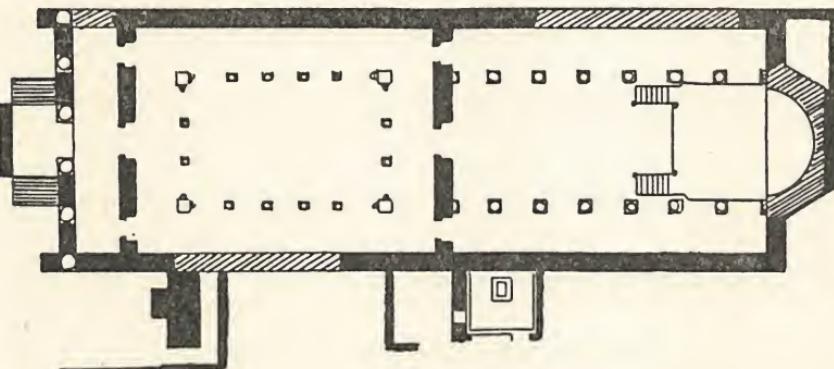


FIG. 4

built upon three levels (Fig. 4). A flight of steps led up to a great portico, with six columns across the width of the building. Out of this three doors led into the atrium, which had a large cistern in the centre.

<sup>1</sup> Vincent and Abel, *op. cit.*, pp. 421-81.

<sup>2</sup> Cabrol and Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie*, XV, 1950, cols. 1159 f.

Another flight of steps ascended to the basilica itself, which had three aisles, a projecting apse, and a crypt at the east end which contained a cave wherein Jesus was believed to have delivered His apocalyptic discourse (Mark 13) to His disciples.<sup>1</sup>

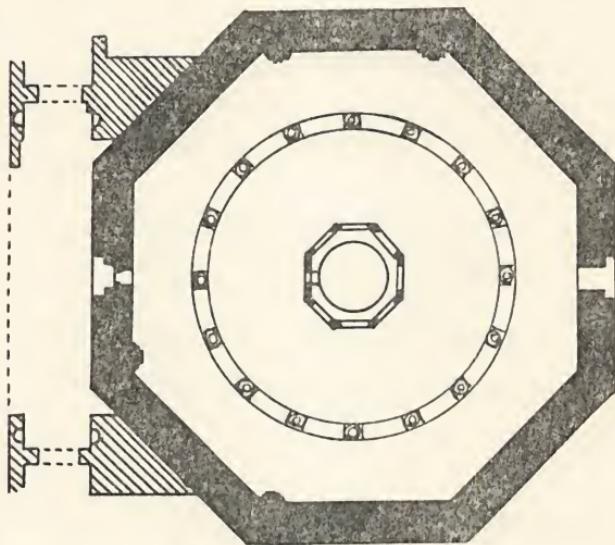


FIG. 5

On the summit of the mount, only a little distance from the Eleona, was the Imbomon<sup>2</sup> or church of the Ascension. It was built c. 375 by a Roman matron named Poemenia, and took the form of an octagon (Fig. 5). Its principal entrance was through a peristyle at the west, and inside was a circular ambulatory and, in the centre, a defined space indicating the spot from which Jesus was believed to have ascended.<sup>3</sup>

For a full appreciation of Egeria's account, we need to know not

<sup>1</sup> Vincent and Abel, *op. cit.*, pp. 337–60.

<sup>2</sup> The word is probably to be derived from *ἐν βωμῷ*, the latter being a hellenization of *bāmāh*, a high place. Imbomon would thus mean the church on the top of the mountain.

<sup>3</sup> The thesis that Helena was responsible for the church of the Ascension, propounded by A. Grabar (*Martyrium. Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chrétien antique*, I, 1946, pp. 283–9), has been devastatingly criticized by L. H. Vincent ("L'Eléona, sanctuaire primitif de l'ascension", *Revue biblique*, LXIV, 1957, pp. 48–71).

only the religious topography of Jerusalem, but also something of the customary services, since the observances of Holy Week comprised (1) the continuation of those services which had been going on throughout the preceding weeks of Lent, and (2) the addition of certain new services peculiar to Holy Week.

The weekday services which were held throughout Lent, including the Great Week, were six in number. All but the last took place in the Anastasis alone, and they were made up of hymns, psalms and prayers. The first, which we may term Nocturns, led directly into the second, Lauds, which began at dawn, i.e. about 6 a.m.; this latter included blessings by the bishop of both the catechumens and the faithful. At 9 a.m., in Lent only, there was Terce; at midday Sext and at 3 p.m. None. At 4 p.m. there was the *lucernare*, the final service of the day, and this was more complex than the preceding. It began, like the others, in the Anastasis where the chief feature was the lighting of all the candles from the lamp burning before the sepulchre. After hymns, antiphons, a commemoration of individuals, prayers and blessings, the congregation moved to the area in front of the Cross for similar devotions, which were then repeated, after a further procession, behind the Cross.<sup>1</sup>

The Sunday services were somewhat different since the main item was the celebration of the Eucharist. A vigil of hymns, antiphons and prayers was held in the atrium. At cock-crow the bishop arrived, the Anastasis was opened and all entered. The usual psalms, etc., were sung, after which the bishop read an account from the Gospels of Jesus' resurrection. They then proceeded to the Cross for further prayers, a blessing and the dismissal. At 6 a.m. the people entered the Martyrium for the Eucharist, which included the ministry of the word, and since it was the practice not only for the bishop to preach but also as many presbyters "as are willing", the service could last until 10 or 11 o'clock. A procession to the Anastasis followed, the dismissal taking place between 11 and midday. The *lucernare* was observed in the afternoon as on weekdays.<sup>2</sup>

We may now turn to Egeria's account, supplementing this, where necessary, by reference to the old Armenian Lectionary whose rubrics provide evidence of the services held in Jerusalem in the early fifth century.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> xxiv, 1-7.

<sup>2</sup> xxiv, 8-xxv, 6.

<sup>3</sup> F. C. Conybeare, *Rituale Armenorum*, 1905, pp. 516-27. The exact harmonization of Egeria and the Lectionary is not always certain.

On *Palm Sunday* or, as Egeria terms it, "the Lord's Day, which begins the Paschal Week", the services followed the usual Sunday pattern just described. The Gospel at the Eucharist was Matt. 21: 1-11, being the account of the entry into Jerusalem. Immediately before the dismissal, the archdeacon gave out two notices: the first to the effect that throughout the ensuing week the congregation was to assemble in the Martyrium at three each afternoon; the second was: "Let us all be ready today in Eleona at 1 p.m." After the completion of the usual ceremonies in the Anastasis, everyone hastened home to eat and, at the appointed time, went up the Mount of Olives to the Eleona, "where hymns and antiphons suitable to the day and to the place are said, and lessons in like manner". At 3 p.m. the congregation moved on to the Imbomon, where a similar service was conducted. Then, shortly before 5 p.m., Matt. 21: 1-11 was again read, and everyone set off down the mount, accompanying the bishop, and chanting Psalm 118, with "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" as its Antiphon, Egeria goes on: "and all the children in the neighbourhood, even those who are too young to walk, are carried by their parents on their shoulders, all of them bearing branches, some of palms and some of olives, and thus the bishop is escorted in the same manner as the Lord was of old. For all, even those of rank, both matrons and men, accompany the bishop all the way on foot in this manner, making these responses, from the top of the mount to the city, and thence through the whole city to the Anastasis, going very slowly lest the people should be wearied; and thus they arrive at the Anastasis at a late hour. And on arriving, although it is late, *lucernare* takes place, with prayer at the cross; after which the people are dismissed". Here then is the first account of the Palm Sunday procession.<sup>1</sup>

*Monday* was unremarkable, apart from the additional service, previously announced, at 3 p.m. in the Martyrium.<sup>2</sup> *Tuesday* followed the same order, but when the customary devotions had been completed, the people went to the Eleona where the bishop read Matt. 24: 3—26: 3, this being the long discourse which, according to the evangelist, Jesus delivered "as he sat on the Mount of Olives".<sup>3</sup> On *Wednesday* the additional feature was inserted at the end of the final service in the Anastasis, and a presbyter read Matt. 26: 14-16 which records the agreement between Judas and the chief priests to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. "And when the passage has been read", reports Egeria, "there is such a moaning and groaning of all the people that no one

<sup>1</sup> xxx, xxxi.

<sup>2</sup> xxxii.

<sup>3</sup> xxxiii.

can help being moved to tears at that hour. Afterward prayer follows, then the blessing, first of the catechumens, and then of the faithful, and the dismissal is made.”<sup>1</sup>

On the fifth weekday, i.e. *Maundy Thursday*, everything proceeded as usual up to and including Sext at midday. But at 2 p.m. the Eucharist was celebrated in the Martyrium, Matt: 26: 20-39, the account of the Last Supper, being read as the Gospel. The dismissal took place at 4 p.m., and the congregation moved *post crucem* for a second celebration. After concluding prayers in the Anastasis, all returned home for a meal, in order to be ready in the Eleona at 7 p.m. for the beginning of the vigil. This vigil consisted of six elements, four on the Mount of Olives, the fifth *ante crucem* just before dawn on Good Friday, and the last at Sion.

1. The first station, as just noted, was in Eleona at 7 p.m. “wher cin”, says Egeria, “is the cave where the Lord was with his apostles on this very day. There, until about 11 p.m., hymns and antiphons suitable to the day and to the place are said; lessons, too, are read in like manner, with prayers interspersed, and the passages from the Gospel are read where the Lord addressed his disciples on that same day as he sat in the same cave which is in that church”, i.e. Matt. 26: 30-5.

2. The second station was in the Imbomon at midnight. Prayers, antiphons, etc., were offered and a further scriptural reading took place which Egeria says was “suitable both to the day and to the place”. It is difficult to identify this pericope but it may have been John 13: 31—18: 1, which was used on the Mount of Olives during this vigil, according to the Armenian Lectionary, since this passage contains the promise of the Paraclete whose descent was consequent upon the ascension of the Son.

3. The third station was lower down the mount in the Gethsemane church, which commemorated the agony in the garden; hence the appointed reading was Matt. 26: 34-46.

4. The fourth station was in the open air, still within the garden, at the place where Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. “And over two hundred church candles are made ready to give light to all the people.”<sup>2</sup> Then “the passage of the Gospel is read where the Lord was taken”, i.e. Matt. 26: 47-56. There followed “so great a moaning and groaning of

<sup>1</sup> xxxiv.

<sup>2</sup> This was undoubtedly utilitarian, but it may also have been a deliberate reminiscence of John 18: 3, the one passage in the Gospels which states that the soldiers came “with lanterns and torches”.

all the people, together with weeping, that their lamentation may be heard perhaps as far as the city".

5. Singing Psalm 118, they then processed down to and through the city, until they arrived *ante crucem* for the fifth station, when "the passage from the Gospel is read where the Lord is brought before Pilate, with everything that is written concerning that which Pilate spake to the Lord or to the Jews", i.e. probably John 18: 28—19: 16. The bishop next encouraged the people to persevere, despite their fatigue, and they went, just before sunrise, to Sion for the final sixth station.

6. At Sion they prayed "at the column at which the Lord was scourged". After this, they returned to sit "for a while in their houses".<sup>1</sup>

The first service of *Good Friday* proper began at 8 a.m. Egeria's description of this veneration of the cross is so graphic that it needs to be quoted in full.

A chair is placed for the bishop in Golgotha *post crucem*<sup>2</sup>; the bishop duly takes his seat in the chair, and a table covered with a linen cloth is placed before him; the deacons stand round the table, and a silver-gilt casket is brought in which is the holy wood of the cross. The casket is opened and both the wood of the cross and the superscription are placed on the table. Now, when it has been put upon the table, the bishop, as he sits, holds the ends of the sacred wood firmly in his hands, while the deacons who stand around guard it. It is guarded in this way because the custom is that the people, both the faithful and the catechumens, come one by one, and bowing down at the table, kiss the sacred wood and pass through. And because, I know not when, some one is said to have bitten off and stolen a piece of the holy wood, it is guarded in this way, by the deacons, who stand round, lest anyone drawing near should attempt to do so again; and as all the people pass by one by one, all bowing themselves, they touch the cross and the superscription, first with their foreheads and then with their eyes; then they kiss the cross and pass on, but no one lays his hands upon it to touch it . . . all the people pass by until noon, entering by one door and going out by another; for this takes place in the same area where the Eucharist was offered, on the previous day, i.e., the fifth weekday.

At midday the people assembled *ante crucem*, the bishop's chair having been moved thither, and a three-hours' service took place, consisting of lections and hymns: "first from the psalms, wherever the passion is mentioned; then from the Apostle, either from the epistles of the

<sup>1</sup> xxxv, xxxvi.

<sup>2</sup> A cross was erected on the hillock, and the bishop sat in front of it; cf. the mosaic in S. Pudenziana which may well represent this scene.

apostles or from their Acts; then the passages from the Gospels, which recount Christ's suffering'. This service was brought to a conclusion at 3 p.m. by the reading of John 19: 30 which records how Jesus gave up His spirit.

The congregation then transferred itself to the Martyrium for the three o'clock service usual during Holy Week, and finally went to the Anastasis for the reading from St. John of the verses which tell how Joseph of Arimathea begged the body of Christ and laid it in a new sepulchre (19: 38-42). A voluntary vigil continued throughout the night in the Anastasis for those strong enough to support it; some stayed the whole time, others came back, after a rest, at midnight.<sup>1</sup>

On the Sabbath, i.e. *Holy Saturday*, the customary services were held at nine and midday, but the three o'clock gathering did not take place since the Martyrium was being prepared for the great Easter Vigil. Egeria gives no description of this, merely saying that "the Paschal vigils are kept as with us",<sup>2</sup> but from the *Mystagogical Lectures*, usually ascribed to Cyril but more probably by his successor John,<sup>3</sup> and from the Armenian Lectionary, it is possible to reconstruct the main sequence.

1. In the Anastasis. The vigil began with the reading of Matt. 27: 62-6, which records the Jews' request to have the tomb sealed and guarded lest Jesus' body be stolen, and Psalm 88 which was interpreted to refer to Jesus' descent to the place of departed spirits. After the Antiphon: "Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and for evermore" (Ps. 113: 2), the bishop lit three candles, which sprang from a single stem, and the clergy and people came up to light their candles. They then processed to the Martyrium.

2. In the Martyrium. A service of twelve lessons<sup>4</sup> divided by Psalms was held, the opening antiphon being Psalm 118: 24. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

3. In the Baptistry. Leaving the congregation in the Martyrium, the bishop, clergy, candidates and sponsors moved to the baptistery. In the outer chamber, facing west, they renounced Satan; then, turning east, they proclaimed their adherence to Christ. Having removed their clothes, the catechumens were anointed with exorcized oil<sup>5</sup> and passed

<sup>1</sup> xxxvii.

<sup>2</sup> xxxviii, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Telfer, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-42.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. 1: 1-3: 24; Gen. 22: 1-18; Exod. 12: 1-24; Jonah 1: 1-4: 11; Exod. 14: 24-15: 21; Isa. 60: 1-13; Job 38: 1-28; 2 Kings 2: 1-22; Jer. 31: 31-4; Joshua 1: 1-9; Ezek. 37: 1-14; Dan. 3: 1-90 (LXX).

<sup>5</sup> *Mystag.*, ii, 3.

into the inner chamber, where each was baptized, confessing his faith in Father, Son and Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> They were next anointed on the forehead, ears, nostrils and breast;<sup>2</sup> they donned white robes and, each bearing a lighted taper, they went from the baptistery to the Anastasis singing Psalm 32: 1: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered."<sup>3</sup>

4. In the Anastasis. The bishop prayed for the newly baptized and went with them to the Martyrium.

5. In the Martyrium. *Easter Day* had now dawned and the Eucharist was celebrated, with 1 Cor. 15: 1-11 as the Epistle, and Matt. 28: 1-20 as the Gospel.

6. In the Anastasis. A further reading of the resurrection narrative was followed by a second celebration, "but everything is done quickly on account of the people, that they should not be delayed any longer, and so the people are dismissed".<sup>4</sup>

The structure of these Holy Week celebrations, now surveyed, scarcely requires comment, but it was so new to Egeria that she could not refrain from stating again and again how all that was done and how all the psalms and lessons were appropriate to the day and to the place. This for her was unusual and at the same time the most striking feature of the various observances. Each day was connected with a corresponding event in the Gospels: Palm Sunday with the entry into Jerusalem, Tuesday with Jesus' discourse on the Mount of Olives, Wednesday with Judas' betrayal, Thursday with the Last Supper, the Agony and the Arrest, Friday with the trial and crucifixion, Saturday with the lying in the tomb; Easter Day with the resurrection. Here is no unitive festival, as in pre-Nicene times, but a day by day and even, on the Thursday and the Friday, an hour by hour re-enactment of the Gospel events. Moreover these events were commemorated in the very places believed to have been the original locations. Topography, in conjunction with a historicization of the evangelists' accounts, thus helped to create Holy Week in Jerusalem. When and by whom was this liturgical pattern devised?

The *terminus ad quem* is the year of Egeria's visit. This has been a matter for debate ever since the document was first published in 1887, but certain facts are undeniable. When describing the several churches in which Egeria attended services the following dates were noted: Martyrium and Anastasis, dedicated 335; Sion c. 340; Imbomon c. 375; Gethsemane 380-90. Egeria also went to Edessa where she saw the

<sup>1</sup> ii, 4.

<sup>2</sup> iv, 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Procat.*, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Egeria, xxxviii, 2.

martyrium of St. Thomas which, according to her, "was beautiful and newly restored".<sup>1</sup> The date of this restoration is known, viz. August 22, 394. This means that Egeria's visit can scarcely be placed before 395. How much later than this, if at all, is impossible to determine, but we may not unreasonably conclude that it was between 395 and 400.<sup>2</sup>

Consideration of the *terminus a quo* must begin with the Catechetical Lectures of Cyril in 350. In that year at least the final three addresses were delivered in the week before Easter; number 16 probably on the Monday, 17 on the Tuesday and 18 on what we now call Good Friday.<sup>3</sup> By the time of Egeria's visit, however, the course was completed before Palm Sunday, and the obvious explanation of this difference is that because of the institution of Holy Week each day was so fully occupied that there was insufficient time for instructing the catechumens; hence the series had to be brought to an end before Holy Week began. So Egeria says: "they are taught for three hours a day for seven weeks, but in the eighth week of Lent, which is called the Great Week, there is no time for them to be taught, because the things described above must be carried out".<sup>4</sup> The creation of Holy Week in Jerusalem thus post-dates the year 350—but how much later is it to be placed?

We began this chapter with a quotation from Epiphanius' *Expositio Fidei*, published in 377. Epiphanius says nothing of services in the morning which were such a feature of Holy Week in Egeria's day—he mentions only those from 3 p.m. until evening—and apart from the vigil that ends at dawn he knows nothing of any acts of worship on Good Friday. Since Epiphanius was a monk at Eleutheropolis, only thirty miles south-west of Jerusalem, until his consecration in 367, and since he evidently continued to keep in touch with what was going on in the holy city, it is reasonable to conclude that his silence is evidence not of a lack of information but of the non-existence of these services at the time when he wrote. We can therefore advance to a date after 377 for the institution of Holy Week.

Cyril of Jerusalem was in exile from his diocese from 367 to 378, nor was it until four years after his return that his position was finally restored, leaving him four further years of uninterrupted peace until his death in 386, when he was succeeded by John. If Egeria visited the

<sup>1</sup> xix, 3.

<sup>2</sup> For further consideration of the date see J. G. Davies, "The *Peregrinatio Egeriae* and the Ascension", *Vig. Christ.*, VIII, 1954, pp. 93–100.

<sup>3</sup> Telfer, *op. cit.*, pp. 36, 182 n. 19.

<sup>4</sup> xlvi, 4.

## HOLY WEEK: A SHORT HISTORY

sacred sites towards the end of the last decade of the century, then the creation of Holy Week must be attributable either to Cyril in the final years of his episcopate or to John in the early years of his.<sup>1</sup>

Cyril is perhaps the more likely candidate, since the Jerusalem Holy Week is the product of a mature and statesmanlike mind rather than the initial act of a young man recently consecrated—John in fact was thirty when he succeeded. Moreover, a study of Cyril's lectures shows how his mind did in fact work, and much of what he said leads logically to a series of Holy Week observances closely linked with the topography of Jerusalem. Cyril was well aware of the evidential and didactic value of the sacred sites; thus, speaking in the Martyrium, he told his candidates: “Christ was truly crucified for our sins. Even supposing you were disposed to contest this, your surroundings rise up before your eyes to refute you, this sacred Golgotha where we now come together because of him who was crucified here.”<sup>2</sup> On another occasion he affirmed that there are many true testimonies to Christ: “the palm tree in the valley, which provided branches to the children of those days who hailed him. Gethsemane bears witness still, to the imagination all but haunted by the form of Judas. This Golgotha, sacred above all such places, bears witness by its very look. The most holy Sepulchre bears witness and the stone that lies there to this day”.<sup>3</sup> The next logical step is to assert the appropriateness of having observances at the original locations, and Cyril did not hesitate to take this step. When speaking of Pentecost, he said: “that happened here in Jerusalem, in the Upper Church of the Apostles, for we are privileged here in every manner. To this spot Christ came down from heaven, and to this spot likewise the Holy Spirit came down from heaven. And it would certainly be most appropriate that just as I talk to you of the things of Christ and Golgotha, I should talk to you about the Holy Spirit in the Upper Church”.<sup>4</sup> The final stage is not merely to say that it is appropriate, it is to do it, and when this took place Holy Week was a *fait accompli*. That Cyril was responsible is a possible conclusion in the light of his ideas formulated as far back as 350.

One final matter needs to be mentioned. Constantine's plan to make

<sup>1</sup> John died in 417. G. Dix (*The Shape of the Liturgy*, 1945, p. 329) had no hesitation in attributing it to Cyril, because he gave 385 as the date of Egeria's visit.

<sup>2</sup> iv, 10; cf. xiii, 23.

<sup>3</sup> x, 19.

<sup>4</sup> xvi, 4.

the Holy Land a centre of pilgrimage would seem to have been all too successful; literally hordes of pilgrims were attracted thither. When Gregory of Nyssa visited Palestine in 379 and saw "those spots at Jerusalem where the memorials of our Lord's life in the flesh are on view", he was disgusted by the behaviour of the pilgrims and of the local population. "There is no form of uncleanness that is not perpetrated among them; rascality, adultery, theft, idolatry, poisoning, quarrelling, murder, are rife; and the last kind of evil is so excessively prevalent, that nowhere in the world are the people so ready to kill each other as there; where kinsmen attack each other like wild beasts and spill each other's blood, merely for the sake of lifeless plunder."<sup>1</sup> When, if our argument be sound, Cyril instituted Holy Week, shortly after Gregory's visit, between 382 and 386, he was taking practical steps to deal with this situation by organizing the devotions of the pilgrims around the sacred sites and by setting forth to the local inhabitants as well the death and resurrection of Jesus as the pattern of Christian living.

As the West had no sacred sites like Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> we may suppose that it was slower in its development of Holy Week, and was more imitative than creative, more conservative than in the van of liturgical change. Indeed the pre-Nicene idea of a unitive festival persisted; so Augustine could speak of "the *triduum* (i.e. a unit of three days) in which the Lord died and rose again".<sup>3</sup> This *triduum* was not based upon a day by day correspondence with the Gospel events but on the typology of Jonah, who passed three days and nights in the belly of the whale as Christ was two nights and one day in the tomb.<sup>4</sup> The lections too indicate that the passion of Jesus was seen as a whole and not as a series of happenings connected with specific days; thus the passion according to Matthew was read on the Sunday (i.e. Palm Sunday), that according to Luke on the Wednesday, and St. John on the Friday. When, later, the Monday and the Tuesday were arranged liturgically, the Gospel on the former was John 12: 1-36, i.e. the anointing at Bethany and the entry, and on the latter John 13: 1-32, i.e. the pedi-

<sup>1</sup> P.G., 46: 1011.

<sup>2</sup> It has been suggested that the group of buildings around the Lateran was intended to reproduce the Holy Places in Palestine that the Jerusalem Holy Week observances might be imitated (F. Cabrol, *Les origines liturgiques*, 1906, p. 187); this is questionable in view of Rome's late adoption of such features as the Palm Sunday procession.

<sup>3</sup> *De Consensu Evang.*, III, 66.

<sup>4</sup> P.-M. Gy, "Semaine sainte et triduum pascal", *Maison-Dieu*, 41, 1955, p. 8.

lavium and the Supper; these were certainly not, in Egeria's phrase, suitable to the day and place, but were the continuation of the readings from St. John which had been going on throughout the fourth and fifth weeks of Lent.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless there was apparent a tendency to historicize, side by side with the conception of a unitive festival; so Ambrose declares: "we must observe not only the day of the passion, but also that of the resurrection, so that we have a day of bitterness and a day of rejoicing; thus on the one we fast, on the other we feast. . . . This is the holy *triduum* . . . during which Christ suffered, lay at rest and rose; and He said concerning this: 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up' ".<sup>2</sup>

Historicization also explains the introduction of the Maundy Thursday mass, which we have already met in Jerusalem. Prior to the fourth century the unique Paschal Eucharist was that at dawn on Easter Day, which consummated the preceding vigil; this was *the* celebration of the whole *triduum*. Nevertheless that the institution of the sacrament took place at the Last Supper on the Thursday was an accepted fact which could not but have an effect once the idea of historical commemoration had come to the fore. Hence in his first letter to Januarius, written c. 400, Augustine says:

A certain cogent argument has appealed to some people: that on one fixed day in the year, that on which the Lord instituted the Supper, it should be permissible to celebrate and receive the body and blood of the Lord after food, so as to make a more striking commemoration. But I think it more fitting for the celebration to be held at such an hour that even he who has fasted may be able to attend it after the meal which is taken at 3 p.m. So we compel no one to take lunch before the Lord's Supper, but we also dare not forbid anyone to do so. Yet I think this was appointed only because many people, and in most places nearly all, are accustomed to bathe on that day; and because some observe the fast, the Eucharist is celebrated in the morning on account of those who intend to take lunch, because they cannot at the same time support fasting and bathing, but in the evening on account of those who fast.<sup>3</sup>

The West is clearly on the move in elaborating its Holy Week observances, but there was still a long way to go before anything like the complex services we have found in Jerusalem were adopted; for this development we must advance into the Middle Ages, and this will be our concern in the following chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Gy, *art. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ep., 23: 12 f.

<sup>3</sup> Ep., 54: 7.

### III

#### HOLY WEEK IN THE MIDDLE AGES

LEST THE TITLE of this chapter should convey a false impression, to the effect that Holy Week in the Middle Ages was a uniform observance throughout the Western Church, it must be immediately stated that this was not in fact so; the way Holy Week was celebrated differed not only from country to country, but even within each country. Cranmer's preface to the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer* applied as much to Holy Week as to any other feature of the Church's liturgical life; in that preface he stated: "there hath been great diversity in saying and singing in churches within this realm: some following Salisbury use, some Hereford use, some the use of Bangor, some of York, and some of Lincoln".

The extent of this divergence may be further appreciated when it is recognized that where there was a great monastic church in a cathedral town, cathedral and abbey seemed to have delighted in finding as many small opportunities as possible of differing in ritual observance.<sup>1</sup> These differences can, however, be overstressed, and while they do constitute an important study in themselves, our main concern here is with the over-all structure of Holy Week, which was largely the same whatever the district. To illustrate its main features we may take the order at Salisbury. The reasons for this choice are that towards the end of the Middle Ages the Use of Sarum was gradually winning its way to a dominant position in England—indeed in 1542 the Canterbury convection adopted it for saying the Hour Services throughout the southern province—further, it was an important source of the first *Book of Common Prayer*, the magnificent cathedral still stands and enables us to reconstruct the setting and the liturgical movements, and finally the literary sources are plentiful.

These literary sources are, however, complex. One familiar only with post-Reformation service books, which contain most of what is

<sup>1</sup> E. Bishop, "Holy Week Rites of Sarum, Hereford and Rouen Compared", *Liturgica Historica*, 1918, p. 294.

needed<sup>1</sup> in a compassable format, would be mistaken were he to assume that this was the situation in the Middle Ages. On the contrary there existed a plethora of books, which may be divided into four main groups. First there were those concerned with the Hour Services; at least fourteen separate volumes were required for these and it is not surprising that for the sake of convenience they were eventually grouped together in what was known as the *Breviarium*.<sup>2</sup> For the Mass some ten books were needed, and these also were finally combined to form the *Missale*.<sup>3</sup> Of its principal sources we have to note three: the *Consuetudinarium*<sup>4</sup> which defined the persons who were to conduct the services—it was thus concerned with ceremonial; the *Custumarium*<sup>5</sup> which defined the character, contents and method of the services—it thus dealt with the rite; and the *Ordinale*<sup>6</sup> which was a directory for the arrangement of the altar service and corresponded to the later rubrics. In the third place there was the *Manuale*<sup>7</sup> which contained the occasional offices, and finally there were various books amongst which of primary importance for our reconstruction was the *Processionale*,<sup>8</sup> in which were to be found the several services for the different processions.

In addition to these literary sources we must give a preview of the architectural source, i.e. of Salisbury Cathedral itself. The Cathedral

<sup>1</sup> They do not, however, contain everything; many of the items in the mediaeval Pontifical are not to be found in the *Book of Common Prayer*, e.g. forms for the consecration of churches or for the induction of ministers. These two items have been included, e.g., in the prayer book of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the U.S.A.

<sup>2</sup> The text of the Sarum Breviary used below is printed in F. Procter and C. Wordsworth, *Breviarium ad Usus insignis ecclesiae Sarum*, I, 1882.

<sup>3</sup> The text of the Missal used below is derived from J. Wickham Legg, *The Sarum Missal*, 1916—this is based upon three late thirteenth-century manuscripts—and F. E. Warren, *The Sarum Missal*, I, 1913—this is an English translation of the folio printed edition of 1526, with rubrics added from the Sarum Processional and the Sarum Gradual.

<sup>4</sup> The text of the Consuetudinary used below is printed in W. H. Frere, *The Use of Sarum*, I, 1898.

<sup>5</sup> Text in Frere, *op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> Text in Frere, *op. cit.*, II, 1901. The link between the Ordinal and the Consuetudinary was the Customary. Later the Ordinal fused with the Pie and became the Directorium (for this see *Ordinale Sarum sive Directorium Sacerdotum*, transcribed by W. Cooke, ed. C. Wordsworth, I, 1901, II, 1902; Henry Bradshaw Soc., vols. 20, 22).

<sup>7</sup> Text printed A. L. Collins, *Manuale ad Usu per celebris ecclesiae Sarisburiensis*, 1960, Henry Bradshaw Soc., vol. 91.

<sup>8</sup> Text printed in W. G. Henderson, *Processionale ad usum Sarum*, 1882.

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church of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Salisbury was begun by Bishop Robert Poole in the year 1220, and it took forty-five years to complete, apart from the spire which was added a century later by Bishop Wyvil between 1334 and 1365. The programme was supervised by one of the canons, Elias de Derham, with the assistance of the master mason, Nicholas of Ely. The result was a magnificent example of English Gothic architecture which has remained virtually unchanged and unspoilt to the present day. Our concern is not with the elevation or stylistic details but with the plan, and this immediately presents a con-

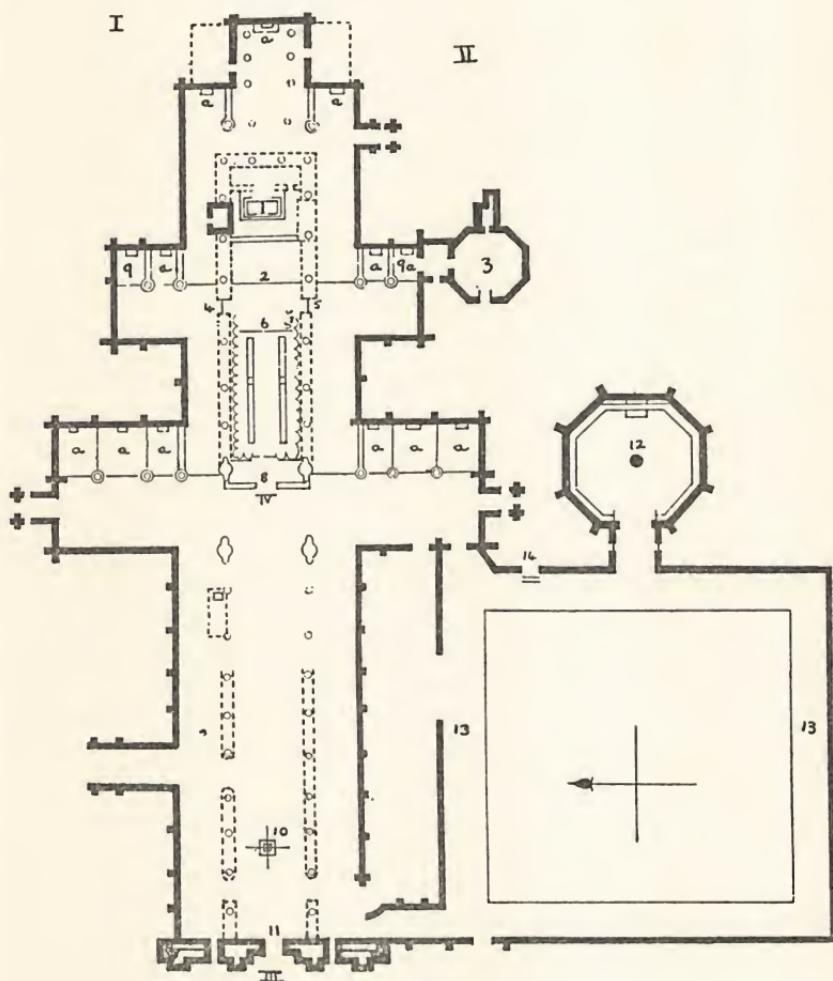


FIG. 6

trast to the basilicas of Jerusalem that were considered in the previous chapter (Fig. 6). First we note the elaborate and almost self-contained sanctuary and choir. There is the principal altar (1), the step down from the presbytery or sanctuary (2), the sacristy close at hand (3), the north (4) and south (5) doors, the further step down into the choir (6), the bishop's seat (7) and the rood screen (8). To appreciate this we must remember that this was a monastic foundation and that special places had to be provided for the clerks to say their offices. We notice further the large number of side altars (a), the product partly of the increased veneration of the saints, partly of the practice of votive masses and partly of the idea that every priest must celebrate every day. Amongst these numerous altars, two require mention since they had a part to play in the Holy Week ceremonies, viz. that of St. Martin (9) and that of St. Nicholas (9a). The main body of the cathedral has three aisles, with the font (10) centrally placed in the nave close to and opposite the west door (11). To the south was the chapter-house (12), built 1263-84, and the cloisters (13), 1263-78, with the canons' door (14). As we shall see, each and every part of this building, and its surrounding church-yard, were used during the course of Holy Week.

At Salisbury the observance of PALM SUNDAY, with which we begin our survey, comprised four elements: (1) the Hours of Prayer, (2) the Blessing of the Palms, (3) the Procession, and (4) the Mass.

#### 1. Hours

The Hours of Prayer were a series of daily services which had developed from a schematization of the devotions of the early Christians, as evidenced by Hippolytus, and from the liturgical practices of the monks. By the later Middle Ages these Hours were eight in number. First there was Nocturns, also called Mattins, which began at midnight; there were three Nocturns on each Sunday except Easter and Whit. This was immediately followed by Lauds at dawn. Then there were Prime, Terce, Sext and None, Vespers and Compline. There was little in the way of general attendance at these, except on Sundays for the office before Mass, and for Vespers. The structure of each service was in the main similar and included psalms and lections.

The historical note of Holy Week is set in the first Nocturn of the Sarum Breviary which affirms how Jesus came to Bethany six days before the Passover and raised Lazarus from the dead.<sup>1</sup> It was not until the third Nocturn that reference was made to the entry into Jerusalem, and from then on the Responds and Antiphons were concerned with

<sup>1</sup> *Breviarium*, dccli.

the carrying of the palm branches and the cries of Hosanna. The variable collect for the day, however, which was also the one used at Mass and is preserved in the *Book of Common Prayer*, did not mention the entry and instead spoke of the crucifixion and looked forward to the resurrection; thus the Roman commemoration of the passion as a whole, as distinct from the Eastern commemoration of the sequence of historical events, was still preserved.

## 2. Blessing of Palms

After Terce, the blessing of the palms took place. This began with an Old Testament lesson (Exod. 15: 27—16: 10) which records how the children of Israel came to Elim, “where were twelve springs of water and three score and ten palm trees”, and longed for the flesh pots of Egypt. The Gospel (John 12: 12-29) was a straightforward account of the entry; the one was read by an acolyte, vested in an alb, at the altar step on the south side, the other by a deacon facing east in the normal manner. Palms and flowers were then placed on the altar for the clergy, and on the step of the altar at the south side for the congregation, and a priest, in red silk cope, blessed them.<sup>1</sup> For this he exorcized them and uttered four prayers over them, the burden of which was that the people who were to carry the branches might themselves be blessed. The distribution followed, during which two Antiphons were sung:

The children of the Hebrews, carrying olive branches, went to meet our Lord, crying out and saying, Hosanna in the highest. The children of the Hebrews spread their garments in the way, and cried saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.<sup>2</sup>

## 3. The Procession

The Palm Sunday Procession then began. We have already met this in Jerusalem in the fourth century; its adoption in the West was slow but steady. It seems to have been observed first in Spain, possibly as early as the fifth century.<sup>3</sup> It would appear to have penetrated Gaul next, since the seventh century Bobbio Missal, which contains Gallican elements, has a form of benediction of the palms,<sup>4</sup> and thence it spread throughout western Europe, although it was not accepted at Rome

<sup>1</sup> See the diagram reproduced from the Processionals of 1502, 1508, 1528, 1532, by C. Wordsworth, *Ceremonies and Processions of the Cathedral Church of Salisbury*, 1901, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Warren, p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> N. M.-D. Boulet, “Le dimanche des rameaux”, *Maison-Dieu*, 41, 1955, p. 22.

<sup>4</sup> E. A. Lowe, *The Bobbio Missal*, 1920, Henry Bradshaw Soc., vol. 58, p. 170.

before the twelfth century. Henceforth not only every cathedral but every parish church had its procession, as evidenced by their accounts, e.g. St. Andrew, East Cheap, London, 1511-12, "payd for palmes and yew, palme sindaye, ivd . . . payd for wyne,<sup>1</sup> Cakes<sup>2</sup> and floures vjd".<sup>3</sup>

The Sarum procession was a most imposing ceremony. It was headed by a figureless cross, painted red,<sup>4</sup> next came the officiating priest in red silk cope and his assistants vested in albs. They were followed by the choir, and the choir by the congregation, everyone carrying a palm branch. To the chanting of Antiphons, referring to the entry into Jerusalem, they passed through the west door, round by the south alley of the cloisters and out by the canons' door to the place of the first station (I), at the north-east angle of the cathedral by the foot of the churchyard cross. There a deacon read the Matthæan account of the entry (21: 1-9). Next, an acolyte in the guise of a prophet, standing in a conspicuous place, intoned the prophetic lesson: "O Jerusalem, look to the East and see; lift up thine eyes, O Jerusalem, and see the power of thy King."<sup>5</sup> This in effect was a greeting of the second procession which was now coming into view around the north transept. This had formed up during the distribution of the palms and consisted of two clerks of the second rank, a lantern, two banners, an unveiled cross,<sup>6</sup> and a shrine with relics in which the Reserved Sacrament was placed in a pyx.<sup>7</sup> An act of adoration then took place, with censings, genuflexions, kissing of the ground and the saying of versicles. The two processions forthwith fused; the red cross disappeared, and all moved off, to the accompaniment of further Antiphons, to the second station on the south side (II). The main feature of this was the singing by seven boys from a high platform, of the hymn "All glory, laud and honour to thee, Redeemer King".<sup>8</sup> And at the end of each verse they threw down cakes and flowers.

<sup>1</sup> For the use of the Singers of the Passion, see below, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> These "singing cakes" or unconsecrated wafers were thrown down, together with the flowers, among the choir boys during the procession.

<sup>3</sup> H. J. Feasey, *Ancient English Holy Week Ceremonial*, 1897, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> D. Rock, *The Church of Our Fathers*, III, ii, 1853, p. 226.

<sup>5</sup> Warren, p. 222.

<sup>6</sup> This was a notable exception to the rule that all crosses should be veiled in Lent; it was probably a token of triumph and a sign of the presence of Christ.

<sup>7</sup> This Corps-Saint procession did not form part of the Sarum rite in the thirteenth century, but was adopted soon afterwards. It was confined to England and Normandy and may have arisen in the former (Bishop, *op. cit.*, p. 300).

<sup>8</sup> *English Hymnal* 622, being a translation by Neale of the hymn composed by Theodulph, bishop of Orleans, when in exile at Angers after 818.

The third station (III), which was reached by passing along the north walk of the cloisters, was in front of the west door, where three clerks sang:

But one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, prophesied, saying, It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not; lest the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.<sup>1</sup>

The shrine, with the relics and the Sacrament, was then lifted up above the door and the people entered under it, coming to a halt for the fourth and final station (IV) before the rood. The cross was unveiled, and the priest began the Antiphon: "Hail, our King, Son of David"; genuflecting and kissing the ground after the first word. The procession finally entered the choir, the cross on the high altar was uncovered, and remained so for the rest of the day, and the Mass began.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. *The Mass*

The Palm Sunday Mass contained no reference to the entry; its main feature was the singing of the whole of the Passion according to Matthew (26: 1—27: 61) in a dramatic manner. The text was divided up between three singers; a tenor to represent the evangelist, a bass for Christ and an alto for the words of either the Jews or the disciples. At the mention of Christ's death a special act of devotion took place, in that the deacon turned to the East and bowed, while saying privately the *Pater Noster*, *Ave Maria* and Ps. 30: 6. The last few verses of the Gospel (27: 62-6) were differentiated from the rest, being read by the deacon in the ordinary Gospel tone.

The remaining Hours took up the theme of the Epistle, which was the kenosis passage in Philippians 2, but an Antiphon at Sext and another at Vespers renewed the reference to the bearing of palms.<sup>3</sup>

On MONDAY and TUESDAY in Holy Week the Hours pursued their normal course, but there was in addition a celebration of Mass. The Gospel on the Monday, as previously noted, was John 12: 1-36, i.e. the anointing at Bethany and the entry, but on the Tuesday the Passion according to Mark was read (14: 1—15: 41), with a genuflexion at the words "gave up the ghost". Thus this account of the Passion, which had not been used originally, possibly because Mark was regarded as an abbreviation of Matthew, was added to the other three, the final verses

<sup>1</sup> Warren, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> Frere, I, pp. 59 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Breviarium*, ccclxii.

(15: 42-6) being differentiated in the usual manner. Tuesday was also marked by the saying of the complete Office of the Dead, which was then intermitted until Eastertide was over.<sup>1</sup>

On WEDNESDAY there was the reading of the Passion according to Luke (22: 1—23: 53), with, however, two preceding collects and two Old Testament lessons, probably a survival from the early days of the Church when two lections, in addition to the Gospel, were customary. There was also the final lowering of the Lenten Veil (*velum quadragesimale*). This was a large curtain which, at Salisbury, was suspended between the choir and the altar from a beam, the pulleys used being still *in situ*. This hung down throughout the whole of Lent on ferias, being raised only at the reading of the Gospel;<sup>2</sup> but on Wednesday in Holy Week, at the words "and the veil of the temple was rent in twain" (Luke 23: 45), it was dropped and not put up again until the following year.<sup>3</sup>

MAUNDY THURSDAY was marked by a series of special features which made it one of the most complex days of the whole ecclesiastical year. These features were seven in number: 1. Tenebrae. 2. The Reconciliation of Penitents. 3. The Mass. 4. The Consecration of the Oils. 5. The Stripping and Washing of the Altars. 6. The Pedilavium or Feet-washing, and 7. The Loving Cup.

#### I. *Tenebrae*

This was a combined service of Mattins or Nocturns and Lauds, with an additional and concluding commemoration of the Passion, divided between two deacons, two *seniores* and the choir, at the climax of which all prostrated themselves. The principal ceremonial item, and that from which the name of the service is probably to be derived, was the gradual extinction of the twenty-four candles which had been lit at the outset. These, we are informed, corresponded to the twelve prophets and the twelve apostles and signified the disbelief of the Jews; their number was also the same as that of the Antiphons and Responds combined, and one candle was put out as each Antiphon or Respond was begun.<sup>4</sup> The rubrics also refer, not very clearly, to a further candle which represented Christ and was hidden behind the altar, being extinguished after *Benedictus* at Lauds,<sup>5</sup> so that the remainder of the office

<sup>1</sup> *Breviarium*, dcclxviii.

<sup>2</sup> Feasey, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-31.

<sup>3</sup> Frere, I, pp. 138 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Breviarium*, dcclxxiv; Frere, I, pp. 142 f.; Feasey, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-94.

<sup>5</sup> Frere, II, p. 67.

was said in complete darkness. The underlying intention of this dramatic action would appear to have been to symbolize the apparent victory of the powers of darkness and the seeming failure of the divine plan of redemption at the crucifixion.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. *The Reconciliation of Penitents*

Lent being essentially a penitential season, it was used from the fourth century as a time for putting to public penance those who had fallen into notorious sin; they were eventually restored to the fellowship of the Church by an act of public reconciliation on Good Friday at Milan,<sup>2</sup> on Maundy Thursday at Rome.<sup>3</sup> At Salisbury, after Prime, Terce, Sext and None, the bishop or his representative, in red silk cope, went in procession, preceded by a sackcloth banner and attended by two deacons in albs and amices, to the west door, outside which the penitents were waiting.

The archdeacon then addressed the bishop in a set form which drew a parallel between the baptism of the catechumens, for whom Lent was the period of preparation, and the reconciliation of the penitents, for whom Lent was a period of discipline. "For, albeit no time is devoid of the riches of the goodness of God, yet now forgiveness of sins is more ample by reason of his indulgence, and the admission of those who are beginning a new life is more numerous by reason of his grace. By those to be regenerated we are increased in numbers, by those who return we are increased in strength."<sup>4</sup> When this was concluded, the bishop, standing inside the door and turning to the north, while making the sign of the cross, began the Antiphon: "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord" (Ps. 34: 11). The deacon, outside the door, then said: "Let us kneel", while a second deacon, on behalf of the bishop, said: "Rise". This was repeated thrice, and then the whole choir took up the Antiphon and began to sing Psalm 34 in full, from which it had been taken. During this the penitents were brought in, one by one, and presented to the bishop, and then all proceeded to the choir, where they prostrated themselves for the singing of the seven penitential psalms. These were followed by *Kyrie eleison* and the *Pater Noster*, and the officiant, taking up a position to the right of the altar, facing south, said some versicles, three collects

<sup>1</sup> J. W. Tyrer, *Historical Survey of Holy Week*, 1932, Alcuin Club, 29, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Ambrose, *Ep.*, 20: 26.

<sup>3</sup> Innocent, *Ep.*, 25: 7.

<sup>4</sup> Warren, p. 237.

and the absolution, at the end of which all prostrated themselves, kissing the benches or the ground.<sup>1</sup> The mass then began.

### 3. Mass

The central theme of the celebration, viz. that it was a commemoration of the institution of the Eucharist, was made explicit by the Epistle, which was the Pauline account of the Supper (1 Cor. 11: 20-32), by the Gospel, which was the Johannine account of the same event, including the Pedilavium (13: 1-15), by the Secret which says that Christ "set forth this to be done by his disciples", and by three clauses inserted into the canon. The first of these insertions is in the prayer *Communicantes* and refers to "the most sacred day in which our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed for us"; the second is in the *Hanc Igitur* and speaks of "the day in which our Lord Jesus Christ delivered to his disciples the celebration of the mysteries of his body and blood"; the third is in the *Qui pridie* and specifies that the day before he suffered is "today".<sup>2</sup> But the most striking element of all was the blessing of the oils, which although it was included in the mass requires separate description that its character may be made clear.

### 4. The Consecration of the Oils

We have already encountered the oil of thanksgiving and the oil of exorcism in Hippolytus' description of the Holy Saturday rite at Rome in the opening decades of the third century. These oils were then blessed in the course of Christian initiation, but by the middle of the century Cyprian provides evidence that in North Africa the chrism or oil of thanksgiving was consecrated at the altar during the course of the Eucharist.<sup>3</sup> The first reference to the Maundy Thursday Mass as the occasion of the blessing is not before the fifth century in a letter of Leo the Great.<sup>4</sup> Henceforth this was the day of the year for the blessing, three oils being then prepared for use: first, the oil of the catechumens; second, the chrism for confirmation, and third, the oil of the sick.<sup>5</sup> The ceremonial at Salisbury, as set out in the Consuetudinary, was precise and elaborate.<sup>6</sup> While the bishop was saying the canon of the mass, the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 238 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Wickham Legg, p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, 70: 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep.*, 156: 5.

<sup>5</sup> The Gelasian Sacramentary has three Maundy Thursday masses: the first included the reconciliation of the penitents; the second was the *Missa Chrismatis*, and the third the *Missa ad Vesperum*. The Gregorian has only one mass and this was the norm in the Middle Ages.

<sup>6</sup> Frere, I, pp. 201-5.

archdeacon of Berkshire, preceded by a minister carrying a banner, came up the centre of the choir to the altar, bearing the oil for the sick in a flask. This the bishop then blessed, making the sign of the cross thrice over it, breathing three times upon it and using three prayers. The archdeacon withdrew and the mass continued until the approach of the archdeacon of Wiltshire, in similar manner, with the oil of the catechumens. The bishop then retired to his seat while the procession with the chrism was formed. At its head were banners, next taperers, two thurifers, two subdeacons each bearing a Gospel book, then a deacon with the flask beneath a canopy, a cross on either side, preceded by three boys singing the hymn *O redemptor*, and finally the three archdeacons with Dorset in the centre.<sup>1</sup> The bishop forthwith returned to the altar and, after mixing some balsam with the oil, dealt with it as previously, except that he began the *Veni Creator* and genuflected. The flask was covered with a linen cloth and during the *Agnus Dei* was offered to the bishop to be kissed; the rest of the clergy saluted it in like manner, and it was borne back to the sacristy.

The mass continued, three hosts being consecrated: one for the communion of the celebrant, one for Good Friday and one for the Easter Sepulchre. Immediately after the *communio*, Vespers began, the post-communion being at its end so that Mass and Vespers finished together.<sup>2</sup>

### 5. *The Washing of the Altars*

The clergy and people at last withdrew to take refreshment and then reassembled for the stripping and washing of the altars. Isidore of Seville, in seventh-century Spain, is a witness to the practice,<sup>3</sup> which was clearly utilitarian in origin; the intention being to clean everything for Easter. The walls and floors, being of stone, were washed, and the altars, also of stone, were similarly treated, after having first been stripped. Since it took time for them to dry, the revesting was postponed until Holy Saturday, and thus the altars remained bare over Good Friday; their unadorned condition was soon thought to harmonize with the desolation of that day.<sup>4</sup>

The Sarum Processional provides an elaborate rite for this simple action. After the blessing of the water, at the altar of St. Nicholas, a procession, beginning with the high altar, went to each in turn.<sup>5</sup> Two priests poured wine and water on the five crosses on each altar, and

<sup>1</sup> So Wordsworth, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> *De eccl. off.*, I: 29.

<sup>5</sup> Wordsworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-80.

<sup>2</sup> *Breviarium*, dcclxxxiv.

<sup>4</sup> Tyrer, *op. cit.*, pp. 107 f.

their assistant followed with more water. A Respond and verse were sung by the choir, with versicles and responses and the collect of the saint in whose honour the altar had been dedicated.<sup>1</sup>

#### 6. *The Washing of the Feet*

When they had repaired to the chapter house, a deacon read the Gospel appointed for the mass and a sermon was delivered. Then the two priests who had washed the altars washed the feet of all present, while Antiphons and psalms were sung. This imitation of Jesus' action at the Last Supper was originally part of the baptismal rite in certain centres such as Milan;<sup>2</sup> by the seventh century it had become detached and was in Spain a separate observance on Maundy Thursday.

#### 7. *The Loving Cup*

After the foot-washing, a loving cup, *caritatis potum*, probably a relic of the agape, was blessed and dispensed,<sup>3</sup> during the reading of John 13: 16–38; 14: 1–31. "At the final words 'Arise, let us go hence' all present will retire into the church and there say Compline privately,<sup>4</sup> . . . et sic compleatur totum servitum hujus diei."<sup>5</sup>

The mediaeval GOOD FRIDAY at Salisbury was less elaborate than Maundy Thursday, but in the course of time it had attracted quite a number of observances of which five must be described. These were: 1. *Tenebrae*. 2. *The Synaxis*. 3. *The Veneration of the Cross*. 4. *The Mass of the Pre-Sanctified*. 5. *The Burial of the Cross and the Host in the Easter Sepulchre*.

##### 1. *Tenebrae*

Of this nothing more need be said; it followed the pattern of the previous day; after it the Hours were said silently in the choir up to and including None.<sup>6</sup>

##### 2. *Synaxis*

From the earliest days of the Church there was no celebration of the Eucharist on Good Friday; the Easter Mass was the mass of the *triduum*. When these days became differentiated and historicized, it was considered fitting that the day of the crucifixion should be one of mourning and should not be marked by the joyful feast of communion; hence Innocent I declared: "it is evident that during these two days the

<sup>1</sup> Warren, pp. 245–8.

<sup>2</sup> Ambrose, *De Myst.* 6: 31–3; *De Sacramen.* 3, 1: 4–7.

<sup>3</sup> Wordsworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 80 f.

<sup>4</sup> Warren, p. 251.

<sup>5</sup> *Breviarium*, ccclxxxvi.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, dccxciii.

apostles both were in mourning and hid themselves for fear of the Jews. And further there is no doubt they fasted on the aforesaid two days to such a degree that the tradition of the Church requires abstinence from the celebration of the Sacrament on those two days".<sup>1</sup> This liturgical gap was filled by a service more or less like the ancient Synaxis. A priest, in red chasuble, with other ministers in albs and amices, went up to the altar, and an acolyte read the first lesson from the choir step (*Hos. 6: 1-6*). After the tract and the collect, the subdeacon read the second lesson from the same place (*Exod. 12: 1-11*), and then came the Passion according to John (*18: 1-19 :37*). At the words "they parted my raiment among them", two acolytes came to the altar to remove the two linen cloths which had been placed upon it for this very purpose. The *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria* followed the words "he bowed his head and gave up the ghost", and *John 19: 38-42* was the concluding portion.

There followed the Solemn Prayers, consisting of nine separate biddings with a collect appropriate to each. The objects of these prayers were (i) the whole Church, (ii) the Pope, (iii) all Christians,<sup>2</sup> (iv) the Sovereign, (v) Catechumens, (vi) all the world, (vii) Heretics and Schismatics, (viii) the Jews, (ix) the Heathen. Before each bidding, except the one for the Jews, the deacon said "Let us kneel", and after each "Rise". This summing up of silent prayer, after a bidding, in the form of a collect may well be the original manner of saying collects, and these examples probably go back to the fifth century at least.

### 3. *Veneration of the Cross*

The origin of this ceremony, known in mediaeval times as "Creeping to the Cross", goes back to the church of Jerusalem in the fourth century; it was copied in those places which acquired portions of the cross and was finally adopted in all churches irrespective of whether they could boast possession of a true relic. At Salisbury, immediately upon the completion of the Solemn Prayers, the priest removed his chasuble and took his seat by the altar, flanked by a deacon and a subdeacon, while two other priests, barefoot and dressed in albs, stood behind the altar, on the right side, and began singing the Reproaches, which recount what Christ has done for His people in bringing them out of Egypt and how they repaid Him with crucifixion. Probably of Gallican or Spanish origin and going back to the eighth or ninth century, they

<sup>1</sup> *Ep., 25: 4.*

<sup>2</sup> This is the second collect for Good Friday in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

were sung by the priest, two deacons in black copes, standing on the steps of the choir, and the choir itself.<sup>1</sup>

The cross was next uncovered to the Antiphon: "Behold the wood of the cross, on which hung the salvation of the world; come let us adore." It was carried to the third altar step; a priest sat on either side, and thither came the clergy barefoot to adore it, and the hymn was sung: "Faithful cross, above all other, one and only noble tree." The cross was then transported through the midst of the choir by the two priests to an altar in the nave, where the people made their acts of veneration during the singing of an Antiphon. The cross was finally conveyed back to the altar for

#### 4. *The Mass of the Pre-Sanctified*

It has already been noted that there was no celebration of the Eucharist on Good Friday, but this did not mean that the faithful were undesirous of communicating. Hence the practice arose of a communion without consecration, the species having been reserved for this purpose at the Maundy Thursday mass. This seems to have arisen in Constantinople in the latter half of the sixth century,<sup>2</sup> but by the later Middle Ages the priest alone consumed the host. At Salisbury he donned his chasuble again, and, with his assistants, said the preparation. The reserved host was placed on the altar, with a mixed chalice, and, after the lavabo, the priest said the *Pater Noster* and the *Libera nos*, placed a particle in the cup and communicated. Vespers then began, coming to an end at the same time as the mass.

#### 5. *The Burial of the Cross and Host in the Easter Sepulchre*

Dramatic representation of a Gospel event, in this case the burial of Christ, could scarcely have been more realistically performed than in the concluding Good Friday ceremony. After Vespers the officiant, having removed his chasuble, accompanied by another priest, conveyed the third of the hosts consecrated on Maundy Thursday, enclosed in a pyx, and the Cross to the Sepulchre. This could be a simple walled recess, a tomb, a vaulted enclosure, a chapel or a temporary structure. At Salisbury the last type would seem to have been in use since the Customary directs that the sepulchre should be moved to its place before the mass.<sup>3</sup> These portable sepulchres had the form of a gabled coffer and stood upon a frame fashioned like a bier:<sup>4</sup> at Sarum it was

<sup>1</sup> Warren, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Tyrer, *op. cit.*, pp. 134, 138.

<sup>3</sup> Frere, I, p. 220. The Rawlinson MS. says "before Prime".

<sup>4</sup> Feasey, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

covered by a veil.<sup>1</sup> The priest began the Respond: "I am counted as one of them that go down into the pit: and I have been even as a man that hath no strength, free among the dead" (Ps. 88: 3, 4). After the censing and sealing of the sepulchre, a second Respond was sung: "The Lord being buried, the sepulchre was sealed: rolling a stone to the door of the sepulchre: setting soldiers to watch it."<sup>2</sup> One is reminded of Egeria's favourite phrase; these actions and words at Salisbury were as "suitable to the day and place" as they could be. While the ministers withdrew, the members of the congregation genuflected in front of the sepulchre and said private prayers. From then until Easter Day at least one wax candle burned continually before the shrine. The origins of this ceremony are uncertain; it may have arisen, as did the Christmas Crib, as a more or less spontaneous act of devotion. One thing is certain however: at first the cross alone was buried; it was not until the thirteenth century that the host was given a place in the action, and then only in England and Normandy.

HOLY SATURDAY began with *Tenebrae*, but Prime to None were said privately,<sup>3</sup> as the cathedral had to be prepared for the Easter festivities; the altars were readorned and even the clerics were directed to shave and have their hair cut.<sup>4</sup> The Easter Vigil proper began after None and comprised the following elements: 1. The Blessing of the New Fire. 2. The Blessing of the Paschal Candle. 3. The Lessons and Prayers. 4. The Litanies. 5. The Blessing of the Font. 6. Baptism and Confirmation, when there were candidates. 7. The Mass.

### i. *The New Fire*

To the words of Ps. 27—"The Lord is my light and my salvation"—the procession went to its station at the west end of the south aisle close to a pillar near the font. When they had taken up their positions (Fig. 7) the material for the new fire was in the centre (1); facing this was the officiant in silk cope (2), with deacon (3) and subdeacon (4) on his left. A boy with a book was a little to one side (5), while candle bearers (6, 7) were in front and behind the officiant. To his right were the thurifer (8) and water bearer (9), and finally, in the farthest position west, a surpliced cleric bearing a wax taper on a spear (10)<sup>5</sup>. The choir stood to the north. In a series of prayers the fire was blessed, sprinkled

<sup>1</sup> Rock, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Warren, p. 264.

<sup>3</sup> *Breviarium*, dcccii.

<sup>4</sup> Frere, I, p. 144.

<sup>5</sup> Compare the diagram in Wordsworth, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

with water, and kindled, probably by means of a flint. The incense too was blessed, set alight and used for censing the new fire. All other lights having been extinguished, including the one before the sepulchre, the taper on the spear was lit.<sup>1</sup> This ceremony seems to have originated in Ireland, and is a relic of pagan usage. The procession then returned to the sanctuary for

2. *The Blessing of the Paschal Candle*

The use of the Paschal Candle—itself in origin the candle of the *Lucernare*—goes back at least to the sixth century, since Ennodius, bishop of Pavia 513–21, has left two forms of benediction.<sup>2</sup> It would

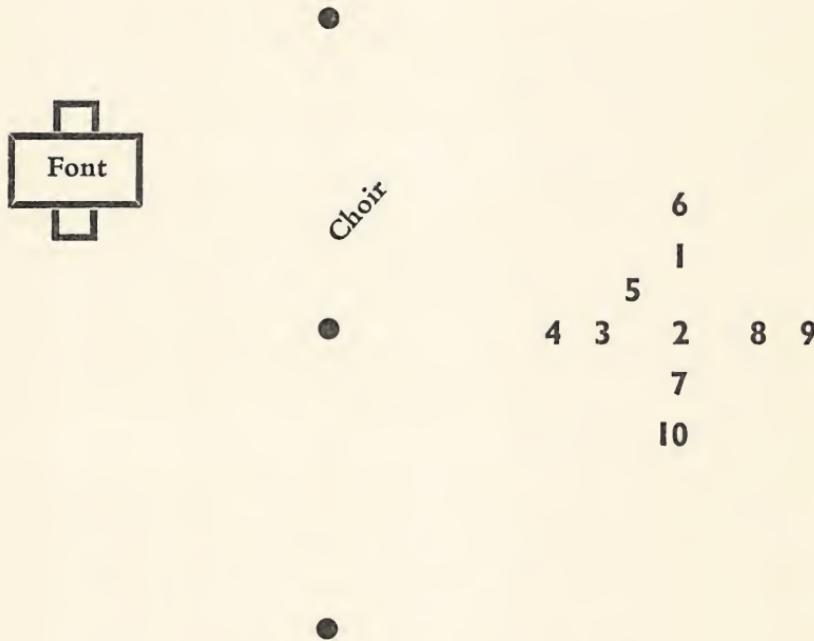


FIG. 7

seem to have been adopted first in lands where the Gallican rite was prevalent. At Sarum it was thirty-six feet high and stood close to the sanctuary step on the north side. There the deacon, who was responsible for the blessing, stood facing the candle, with taperers to right and left,

<sup>1</sup> Warren, pp. 265–9; Frere, I, pp. 144 ff.

<sup>2</sup> P.L., 63: 257, 261.

the thurifer behind and the subdeacon and spear-bearer opposite to him.<sup>1</sup> The benediction was in fact a composition in praise of the Easter candle, the *Exsultet* or *Laus cerei* which goes back to the fifth century, and its theme was the triumph of Christ over darkness. During this five grains of incense,<sup>2</sup> representing the wounds of Christ, were inserted in the candle in the shape of a cross and it was lit from the new fire and censed. The candles on either side of the deacon were next lit and their bearer went round the cathedral to light all the candles, producing a blaze of illumination out of the darkness.

### 3. *The Lessons and Prayers*

Readings from scripture were a normal feature of vigils in the days of the early Church and in this part of the Holy Saturday ceremonies we have a survival of this ancient practice. At Jerusalem there were twelve lessons, but at Salisbury only four were used, of which two more or less corresponded with two of the Jerusalem series.<sup>3</sup> Each was followed by a collect containing a reference to the preceding lection.<sup>4</sup>

### 4. *The Litanies*

The Litanies had originally a threefold purpose. They were sung while the bishop went to the baptistery; they filled in the time while the baptisms were taking place, and they served as an introduction to the mass that was the climax of the vigil. At Salisbury there were two litanies, and the procession to the font moved off shortly after the beginning of the second one. The first was a sevenfold litany; it was sevenfold in that seven apostles, seven martyrs, seven confessors and seven virgins were invoked, and it was sung by seven boys standing in the centre of the choir. The second was a fivefold litany, in which five saints of each class were invoked, and it was sung by five deacons, beginning in the middle of the choir. At the fourth petition the procession to the font began.

### 5. *The Blessing of the Font*

The procession, which went out through the south choir door and along the south aisle, was led by a crucifer, after whom came candle-bearers, the thurifer, a book-carrier, one with the candle for blessing the font, a deacon carrying the oil and another the chrism, the five

<sup>1</sup> See the slightly different arrangement in the Processionals of 1502, etc., Wordsworth, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> The practice is first attested in the tenth century in the Sacramentary of Ratold (A. A. King, *Liturgy of the Roman Church*, 1957, p. 414).

<sup>3</sup> The first and second at Salisbury corresponded with the first and fifth at Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup> Warren, pp. 274-7.

## HOLY WEEK: A SHORT HISTORY

deacons who were chanting the litany, and finally the priest in red silk cope in front of the remainder of the clerks.<sup>1</sup> The station at the font (Fig. 8) was as carefully arranged as the previous one for the blessing of the new fire. The bishop or officiant (1) stood on the step at the west side of the font facing east; on the eastern step was a boy with the book (2). To the right of the officiant was a deacon (3), to his left the subdeacon (4); then the bearer of the candle (5) and the thurifer (6), the bearer of the chrism (7) and of the oil (8). Opposite the officiant was the crucifer (9), flanked by candle-bearers (11, 10), while behind him were the five singing deacons (12–16).<sup>2</sup> An examination of the blessing belongs more to the history of the baptismal liturgy than to that of Holy Week, and we may confine ourselves to noting the accompanying actions: the

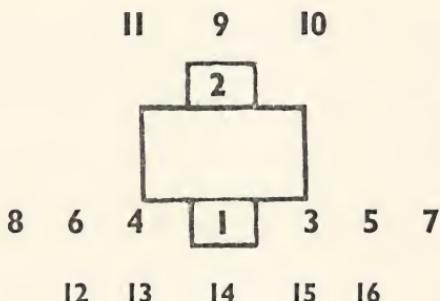


FIG. 8

dividing of the water in the shape of the cross, the casting of it to the four quarters, the breathing on it, the plunging of the candle into it, and finally, if a baptism were to take place, the pouring in of the oil and chrism.<sup>3</sup>

### 6. Baptism<sup>4</sup> and Confirmation<sup>5</sup>

For the same reason as that just given the details of these rites need not concern us, especially as they were not always administered, unless the canon was observed which required children born during Holy Week not to be brought for baptism until the Easter Vigil.

<sup>1</sup> Frere, I, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Warren, pp. 280 f.; see the somewhat different arrangement according to the Processionals of 1502, etc., Wordsworth, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> *Manuale*, pp. 31–5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35–43.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 166 f.

*7. The Mass*

At Salisbury this was a joyful occasion with bells ringing during the *Gloria in excelsis* and the singing of the Alleluia from the pulpit by two clerks. After the communion, the briefest form of Vespers was inserted into the service and so the day's celebrations came to an end. In origin this was of course the great Easter Eucharist, the climax of the evening vigil; but as the centuries passed the hour of this celebration became earlier and earlier. At Salisbury the ceremonies began after None, i.e. about 3.30 p.m., and would therefore have finished by early evening. The mass was thus not a dawn celebration on Easter Day, but a late afternoon service on Holy Saturday. Consequently another mass took place on Easter Day itself and the celebration of the resurrection was divided, as it were, into two, some of it at the vigil, with such ceremonies as the lighting of the Paschal Candle, and some of it on the Sunday. The most noticeable "hangover" to the Sunday was the visit to the Sepulchre, when the host was taken to the high altar, and the cross was borne in procession through the south door of the presbytery, down the centre of the choir, and round along the north aisle to the altar of St. Martin, to the singing of an Antiphon declaring the resurrection.<sup>1</sup> The cross was then adored, the veils were removed from all the images and the other crosses, and the bells rang out to summon to Mattins. Holy Week had reached its climax.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is now the second anthem in the *Book of Common Prayer* for Morning Prayer on Easter Day.

<sup>2</sup> Warren, pp. 289 f.

## IV

### HOLY WEEK IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

IN THIS CONCLUDING chapter I propose to confine myself to two aspects of Holy Week at the present day: these are, first, the recent reforms in the Roman Catholic observances, and, second, the recovery of Holy Week within the Church of England.

The Roman Catholic reforms were brought about by two decrees of the Congregation of Rites: *Dominicae Resurrectionis Vigiliam*, promulgated on Feb. 9, 1951, and further explicated on Jan. 12 of the following year, and *Maxima Redemptionis Nostrae Mysteria*, dated Nov. 16, 1955, and further explicated on Feb. 1, 1957.<sup>1</sup> In order to appreciate these, something must be said of the Roman manner of observing Holy Week before the reforms took effect. Generally speaking the ceremonies were very similar, and often identical, with those we have witnessed at Salisbury in the later Middle Ages, and we need do no more than note the most striking differences.<sup>2</sup>

On Palm Sunday, according to the Roman order, there was the blessing and distribution of palms, the procession and the mass. Unlike the Sarum Use, the blessing was long and complex—it included a lesson, as well as the Gospel, a preface and the Sanctus<sup>3</sup>—while the procession was confined to the clergy and their assistants and did not include the carrying of the Reserved Sacrament. The *triduum*, which now included the Thursday, was largely characterized by the tendency to anticipate everything; so, for example, *Tenebrae*, originally the early morning office on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday, was held on the

<sup>1</sup> For texts see *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, xxxiii, 1951, pp. 128–37; xxxvii, 1955, pp. 838–47.

<sup>2</sup> A. Fortescue, *The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described*, 8th ed. 1948, ed. J. O'Connell, pp. 262–332.

<sup>3</sup> This has led some to suppose that this was originally a mass with the palms taking the place of the species; it may be that this is all that is left of a mass said in the early morning, in addition to the main Sunday liturgy or, more probably, it assumed this length and form because it frequently took place in a church other than that at which the procession finished and the mass began (H. Thurston, *Lent and Holy Week*, 1904, pp. 199 ff.).

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights. Maundy Thursday had a morning mass with, in cathedrals, the blessing of the oils, and a second mass at which two hosts were consecrated, not three as at Salisbury, one for the priest's communion and one for the altar of repose.<sup>1</sup> This latter feature is another example of anticipation, in so far as it is all that remains of the mediæval burial of the cross and host in the Easter Sepulchre on Good Friday. The altars were stripped but not washed and the Maundy or foot-washing was administered to thirteen people only, representing Jesus and the twelve apostles. Good Friday, apart from the earlier hour of the observances, differed little from the Sarum rite, and the same is true of Holy Saturday, everything including the vigil mass taking place in the morning; the new fire, however, was lit outside the church in the porch and there were twelve lessons instead of the Salisbury four. It is easy to criticize this arrangement for its complexity, for its false emphases, for its obscuring of the meaning of the ceremonies by having them at unsuitable times, and for its lack of congregational participation, in the sense either that they were given no part in what took place or that the services were held at hours when the majority were at work and so were unable to be present. Indeed it was the appreciation of these shortcomings which produced the reform.

On Palm Sunday the long blessing of the palms, with its penitential note, the even longer distribution, which because of the time taken gave it a false importance, and the clerical procession have all been changed. A short collect, Psalm 24 and the Gospel, is now all that remains of the ancient blessing; the palms are normally given to the congregation beforehand; the ceremony is usually conducted in the parish hall and the main emphasis is laid upon the procession of clergy and congregation to the church, the predominant note being that of triumph. The mass then proceeds as previously.

Tenebrae has been restored to Maundy Thursday morning, and a *Missa Chrismatis*, without communion, has been provided for cathedrals. The main service is the evening mass, "not before 4 p.m. and not after 9". The Maundy may take place after the Gospel, and is thus included within the sacramental action. Two hosts are no longer consecrated, but sufficient wafers for the general communion on the following day, and these are conveyed in a ciborium to a side altar—the altar of repose—visits to which should be "prudently linked with the liturgy" and not protracted after midnight. Vespers is omitted, as it is

<sup>1</sup> With the altar of repose was connected the "watch of the Passion", a night-long devotion before the Reserved Sacrament.

also on Good Friday, and Compline on Saturday, its place being taken by the principal liturgical action.

On Good Friday, the communion may take place any time after noon and not later than 9 p.m. This is not a celebration, but the reserved wafers kept at the altar of repose are used to communicate all the congregation.

On Holy Saturday the vigil takes place in the evening, beginning at such a time that the mass may start towards midnight. The members of the congregation, each with a candle, go outside for the blessing of the fire. A short benediction precedes the *Exsultet* and all take part in the procession of the Paschal Candle<sup>1</sup> as it is carried into the darkened church. The lessons have been reduced from twelve to four, and there is to be time for silent prayer before each collect. The single litany is divided into two, half before the blessing of the baptismal water, which now takes place in front of the congregation in a receptacle placed upon the altar. There follows the procession to the font, the pouring of the water into it, and then, an entirely new feature, the renewal of the baptismal promises, after which the litany is completed. Then comes the solemn Easter Vigil mass.

The instructions that have been issued with these reforms indicate clearly their pastoral intention. All priests are bidden to familiarize themselves with this *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae instauratus*, not merely so that they can conduct the ceremonies in a decent manner, but in order that they can appreciate their meaning and teach it to the faithful, who may then join in with full understanding. The changes indeed stem from three factors: first, a desire for simplification, e.g. the reduction of the twelve lessons at the Easter Vigil to four; second, a desire to change certain emphases and bring out the true meaning of what is done, e.g. the stress on the palm procession rather than on the blessing; third, a desire to include the congregation in the action, e.g. the blessing of the baptismal water *coram populo* and the renewal of the baptismal promises in the vernacular. There seems little doubt that the result to date has been an increased awareness of the Christian mysteries celebrated during the Great Week as the crown of the ecclesiastical year.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The officiant is directed to make incisions in the candle: a cross, with alpha above and omega below, and in its arms the four numbers of the current year; this practice goes back to the seventh century (A. A. King, *Liturgy of the Roman Church*, 1957, p. 414).

<sup>2</sup> See the results of the survey reported in *Maison-Dieu*, 67, 1961, pp. 110–22, 159–62, 190–8.

The contemporary Roman observance of Holy Week is an impressive, moving and edifying sequence, and even if it does retain numerous elements which are of mediaeval growth, it has also preserved valuable features from the days of the early Church. The Church of England, at the Reformation, removed much of what had been distinctive of Holy Week. No ritual or ceremonial differences marked each day, apart from the variable parts of the service, e.g. the lections. Thus Palm Sunday entitled "the Sunday next before Easter", lost its blessing, and while the Gospel continued to be the Matthean Passion,<sup>1</sup> there were no special lessons at either Morning or Evening Prayer,<sup>2</sup> and the day passed without any reference to the triumphal entry. The Marcan Passion, previously read *in toto* on the Tuesday, was now divided between the Monday and the Tuesday. The Lucan Passion was also read in two halves on the Wednesday and the Thursday, reference to the institution on the latter being provided in the Epistle (1 Cor. 11). The Johannine Passion,<sup>3</sup> however, continued to be used in full on Good Friday, with three collects preceding, while on Holy Saturday Matt. 27: 57-66, the burial and watch at the tomb, was appointed.

It is difficult to regard this as other than an impoverishment; but little or nothing was done about it for centuries until, under the influence of the Oxford Movement, the Christian Year, and with it Holy Week, began to assume its importance once again. There were two ways of implementing this desire to restore the Great Week to something like its former glory within the Church of England; incumbents could either adopt the contemporary Roman usage or adapt ancient practices to celebrate it in a fitting manner. In many churches, which one would call Anglo-Catholic, the first of these expedients recommended itself, and the entire Roman Holy Week ceremonies, from the blessing of the palms to that of the Paschal Candle, were copied forthwith. Thus, to move to more modern times, there was published in 1944, for Christ Church, St. Leonards-on-sea, *Holy Week, a Description of the Services* by E. J. Rowland, which was in effect an explanation of

<sup>1</sup> In 1662 the Gospel was reduced to Matt. 27, and chapter 26 became the second lesson at Mattins, the Lucan account of the entry becoming the second lesson at Evensong.

<sup>2</sup> Cranmer's lectionary was based on the civil year; proper lessons, when appointed, were printed with the Collect, Epistle and Gospel. In 1559 a table giving first lessons for each Sunday in the ecclesiastical year was introduced, and, with minor alterations in 1604 and 1662, this system lasted until the latter half of the nineteenth century.

<sup>3</sup> This was cut down to chapter 19 in 1662.

the contemporary Roman practices. After the reforms, briefly surveyed above, there appeared in 1956, from the same source, *Holy Week and Easter. The Liturgical Texts in accordance with the Restored Rite*.

The alternative procedure, i.e. that of adapting ancient usages, was recommended by two influential works: *The Parson's Handbook* by Percy Dearmer, first published in 1899, and *A Directory of Ceremonial*, II, an Alcuin Club volume, published in 1930.<sup>1</sup> Dearmer began his remarks upon Holy Week with the statement that the services "were of old many and elaborate. The almost universal tendency to supplement those given in the Prayer Book—sometimes by new services such as the Three Hours, or hymns and dissolving views, sometimes by old, such as the Reproaches or Tenebrae—shows that there is now a keen want of more observances during this solemn week".<sup>2</sup> He then proceeded, on the basis of the services prescribed in the Prayer Book and of the Sarum Use, to make a number of suggestions. On Palm Sunday he advocated the restoration of the blessing and procession, having for the former only a benedictory collect and allowing all the congregation, where possible, to join in the latter to the singing of "Glory, laud and honour". As for Tenebrae, he saw no objection to it but doubted its value in that the Church of England had replaced the old Mattins and Lauds by Morning Prayer. He was in favour of the stripping and washing of the altars after the Maundy Thursday Eucharist, and regarded the services essential for Good Friday as being Mattins, Litany, Ante-Communion and Evensong, though he allowed the possible value of the Three Hours and of the Reproaches, and welcomed the use of additional collects from the end of the communion service to correspond with the Solemn Prayers. On Holy Saturday he prescribed Mattins, Ante-Communion and Evensong, strongly recommended baptism and showed a preference for the Paschal Candle and for the use of a litany, if there were a baptism.<sup>3</sup>

*A Directory of Ceremonial* went further than *The Parson's Handbook* in that it provided more detailed instructions and gave texts of the prayers. Its purpose—I quote the preface—"is to make suggestions for the conduct of services on certain of the fasts and festivals of the Church's year. In some churches the clergy desire to emphasize the teaching of these

<sup>1</sup> Mention should also be made of the chapter entitled "Anglican adaptation of some Latin rites and ceremonies" by K. D. Mackenzie in the widely read *Liturgy and Worship*, 1932.

<sup>2</sup> p. 453.

<sup>3</sup> pp. 453–65.

occasions in accordance with old tradition. This book is an attempt to provide material for enriching the services of the Book of Common Prayer in those places where eloquent and symbolic action in public worship is specially called for". The compilers tried "to pick out the features of the ancient services that are most suitable for modern use, and then to make directions for carrying them out, based partly on traditional usage and partly on common sense. It would be quite easy, for those who desire it, to draw further from the ancient services, or, on the other hand, to omit certain features here suggested." Each day was provided with directions in two forms, one for cathedrals and the other, simpler, for the parish church.<sup>1</sup>

On Palm Sunday, the blessing, distribution and procession before the Eucharist were advocated. The Sarum lesson and Gospel, a short benediction, a procession with three stations, Matt. 21: 1-9 being read, as at Salisbury, the first at the east end of the north aisle, the second at the rood and the third at the high altar,<sup>2</sup> and concluding collect are all set out.<sup>3</sup> Tenebrae was described as "an additional devotion particularly appropriate to the days in question"<sup>4</sup> and a description of the Lenten Hearse to bear the candles was given. On Maundy Thursday the stripping and washing of the altars was prescribed, either after the Eucharist or after Evensong,<sup>5</sup> and the first four Responds and versicles from the Sarum Missal<sup>6</sup> were printed for use during it.<sup>7</sup> On Good Friday, while recognizing the widespread observance of the Three Hours, the compilers of the Directory suggested a more liturgical service, such as Litany, Ante-Communion, Sermon and Evensong! "Experience shows", they commented, "that there is a popular demand for some devotion in addition to those provided in the Prayer Book; the Veneration of the Cross is one of the oldest known observances in connexion with the Passion of our Lord; it provides an opportunity for personal response and public witness, and it is practised today without any trace of superstition or extravagance."<sup>8</sup> They advocated using with it Hos. 6: 1-6, which was originally the first of the three lections on Good Friday, the Reproaches and some Responds.<sup>9</sup> On Easter Eve, they proposed Mattins, Ante-Communion and Evensong, which is of the day and not the first Evensong of Easter; then, whenever possible, a baptism, with a procession to the font and a final blessing from

<sup>1</sup> Similarly the reformed Roman order has solemn and simple rites; J. O'Connell, *The Ceremonies of Holy Week*, 3rd ed., 1960.

<sup>2</sup> *Directory*, pp. 18 f.      <sup>3</sup> pp. 49 f.      <sup>4</sup> p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Warren, pp. 245 f.      <sup>7</sup> *Directory*, pp. 51 f.      <sup>8</sup> p. 28.

<sup>5</sup> pp. 24-7.

<sup>9</sup> pp. 52 f.

the altar.<sup>1</sup> Simple, dignified and meaningful, we cannot but recognize these suggestions as a move in the right direction towards the restoration of Holy Week.

We have now looked at the Roman reforms and at the progressive recovery of Holy Week within the Church of England; two other matters remain for consideration. There is, first, the question as to what the parish priest can do at the present day to make the observance of Holy Week a reality to his people; there is, second, the question of liturgical revision which must, in time, be concerned not only with baptism and confirmation and the Eucharist but with all aspects of the Church's worshipping life, including Holy Week. The first of these resolves itself into the problem what to do *in addition* to the existing services authorized in the Prayer Book; the second allows greater freedom for speculation about a complete revision of the entire Holy Week services.

The observance of Holy Week within the parish here and now need not detain us long. Not only are the suggestions in *The Parson's Handbook* and the *Directory of Ceremonial* as valid and helpful as when they were originally published, but the subject has been examined in a recent book which I cannot do better than recommend to those who have not yet had the opportunity of reading it. The book is *Christ our Passover. The Liturgical Observance of Holy Week*, by J. T. Martin (1958). The author points out that "a survey of church notice-boards will show that in Holy Week our congregations are presented with a bewildering variety of aids to their devotion—evangelistic sermons, didactic talks, devotional addresses, slides, film-strips, Passion plays, choral recitals, Compline, Stations of the Cross, to name the most common: and almost any combination of these is possible. The effect of piling the plate with these devotional titbits instead of with the solid food of the liturgy is unfortunate".<sup>2</sup> The result is that instead of the Church coming together to live through Holy Week and to enter into the successive aspects of the mystery of Christ, so that the members participate in the saving events, Holy Week is regarded as a series of disconnected services and other attractions, attendance at which is purely optional.

Taking the basic structure to be that provided by the Prayer Book, i.e. daily Mattins, Evensong and Holy Communion, Mr. Martin sets out to show their interconnexion and lays stress on four items, "whose significance is almost immediately apparent", viz. the blessing and distribution of the palms, the stripping of the altars, the lighting of the

<sup>1</sup> pp. 32-41.

<sup>2</sup> p. 10.

Easter Candle and the renewal of the baptismal promises. He advocates an evening celebration on Maundy Thursday, followed by the stripping of the altars to commemorate the flight of the disciples from Gethsemane, and the extinguishing of the lights. On Good Friday the Eucharist is intended to be the main service of the day. The Paschal Vigil is very similar to the reformed Roman order and culminates in a midnight mass of Easter. This is a simple scheme which has much to recommend it, especially as it is the fruit of parochial experience.

Consideration of a complete revision of the Holy Week services must begin both from a clear understanding of the purpose and meaning of the week and from a definition of the different elements which are to be combined within it. In the first chapter some attention was paid to the first of these factors, but it demands more thorough examination.

The purpose of Holy Week, as previously defined, was to set the facts of the Gospel before the worshippers; but it must be emphasized that this should not be taken to mean that Holy Week is merely an occasion for pious remembrance. It is or should be more than a series of commemorations of past events recalled to mind; it is or should be the means whereby the worshippers participate in the saving events. We should not think of it as a number of ceremonies at which the faithful are present, but as a unified sequence of sacramental acts whereby they commit themselves afresh to Christ and share anew in His death and resurrection.

Thus the Holy Week observances should centre in that sacramental reality which objectively continues the work of salvation and subjectively enables us to give thanks for that which we have received and are receiving. But the interior reality of the sacramental action is Christ Himself and the Paschal mystery is the mystery of our redemption; implicit in the Christian's life on every day of the year, it is made explicit, and in a post-Christian era needs to be made explicit, in the Holy Week celebrations. Unless the Church can learn to identify itself with Christ in His death and resurrection, unless it can, on Palm Sunday, approach His victory through death, die with Him on Good Friday and rise with Him at the culmination of the Paschal Vigil, it cannot accomplish its mission, which is not only to proclaim the good news but to embody it and to make it the pattern of its corporate life, even as Christ Himself not only proclaimed the Gospel but was and is the Gospel. The Paschal mystery is indeed a unity, as Christ's saving action was really *one* action, composed of several elements, and it is

these several elements which are unfolded in Holy Week that their efficacious presence and the oneness of the Easter action in the multiplicity of rites may be experienced. It is at this point that we must seek to define the different parts of the one whole which the Great Week should be.

We have here to distinguish and combine the unitive aspect of the festival and the historical, as well as its essentials and its edifying additions. Despite what has just been said, i.e. that Holy Week is not primarily a series of historical commemorations but a present participation in the saving events, it is true that the festival refers to an historical reality, to the action and intervention in time of the God of history. Thus the historical sequence, worked out in Jerusalem in the fourth century, has its undoubted justification. The main events are quite evident: the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday, the institution of the Eucharist on Maundy Thursday, the crucifixion on Good Friday, the rest in the tomb on Holy Saturday and the resurrection on Easter Day—but this of course leaves the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday with no historical connexion. At Jerusalem the Tuesday was related to Jesus' discourse on the Mount of Olives (Matt. 24: 3–26), and the Wednesday to Judas' agreement with the chief priests to betray his Master (Matt. 26: 14–16); there is no evidence concerning the Monday, but, following the Marcan order, we could add here the cleansing of the Temple (Mark 11: 15–18); in this way each day would be connected with the events of the final week of Jesus' ministry.

How to combine this with the unitive aspect of the festival presents a difficulty. To commemorate and share in the death only on the Friday and the resurrection only on the Sunday is to split asunder the unity of the saving action. The resurrection life springs from the death; it is the death that engenders the life. The Christian Pascha is not just the commemoration of successive events. "It is truly and essentially a movement, a passage, a spiritual dynamism, because it is the liturgical celebration of that saving act whereby the Lord Jesus Christ, passing from this world to the Father, dying in order to rise again and to give life to men by his death, enables the Church to pass with him into the kingdom of everlasting life."<sup>1</sup> As long as the Paschal Vigil was the entire liturgical observance, there was no chance of forgetting this; and despite the developments that have been traced, it is the Paschal Vigil, culminating in the Easter Eucharist, that is the centre of the whole

<sup>1</sup> J. Gaillard, "Le mystère pascal dans le renouveau liturgique", *Maison-Dieu*, 61, 1961, p. 42.

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festival. The preceding days of Holy Week are "a preparation or prolongation and must be orientated towards this centre".<sup>1</sup>

Holy Week is then a setting out in detail of the riches of the Paschal mystery, its celebration being spread over several days following a plan which conforms to the Gospel record. But neither Palm Sunday nor any other day should be treated as more or less independent entities; they are steps in a progression towards Easter. It is also to be recalled that Holy Week itself is the final stage in a long period of preparation, viz. Lent, which becomes more and more intense as it reaches its climax. Each element, once defined, has to be integrated: the historical events with the one action of salvation, and both with the eschatological undertones, which I have hitherto passed over.

The eschatological dimension of this festival is associated with the idea of the Passion of Christ and of the Pascha. "Passion" is not just suffering; it conveys the idea of victory, so that the passion of the martyr was his victorious suffering whereby he entered into glory.<sup>2</sup> The idea of the Pascha is that of passing over, a *transitus*, from the present age to that which is to come. Underlying the Paschal symbolism is a triple analogy between the passing of the Hebrews from Egypt to the Promised Land, the passing of Christ from death to life, and our own passing from sin to grace. This is the interior reality of the saving event made present here and now through the liturgical celebrations.

It is this meaning that has to be conveyed through the means at our disposal, and these are three in number: the offices, which for an Anglican mean primarily Mattins and Evensong, the Eucharist and such additional devotions as may be deemed to be valuable. How can the successive elements of the one mystery be so divided between these several features that, while celebrating the several parts, we are always conscious of the whole?

Before any attention be paid to popular devotions and extra quasi-sacramental acts, it has to be recognized that the essential matter is the Eucharist; if Holy Week be not sacramentally observed, it rapidly becomes a pious remembering instead of a present participation. But then every Eucharist is a Paschal sacrament: it rests upon the institution; it proclaims the Lord's death till He come; it is the instrument of sharing in Christ's risen life. All that is comprised within it is spread over the several days of Holy Week: the introit corresponding with the pro-

<sup>1</sup> D. B. Botte, "La question pascale", *Maison-Dieu*, 41, 1955, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> C. Mohrmann, "Pascha, Passio, Transitus", *Ephemerides liturgicae*, 66, 1952, pp. 37-52.

cession on Palm Sunday and the ministry of the Word with the teaching of Jesus on the Monday and Tuesday: the consecration prayer, including the institution narrative, with the preparation for the betrayal, the Last Supper and the betrayal itself on the Wednesday and Thursday: the whole service proclaims the crucifixion on the Friday and looks forward to the return, this being equivalent to the waiting on Holy Saturday, while the act of communion is with the risen Lord who appeared to His followers on the Sunday. Here is succession without discontinuity; the whole mystery is present in the several parts as the Eucharist is celebrated day by day and related to specific events. The unitive aspect of the festival was of course constantly stressed in the Middle Ages by the reading of the Passion—Matthew on Palm Sunday, Mark on Tuesday, Luke on Wednesday and John on Friday—but it is questionable how far this is necessary and how far it can be reconciled with the underlying historical structure. These questions cannot be answered before the relation of the offices to the Eucharist has been reviewed.

We are here faced with a practical problem; is it reasonable to suppose that congregations will attend not only the Eucharist, but also Morning and Evening Prayer on each day of Holy Week? Though this may be the ideal, it is unlikely to be achieved. In which case, one cannot divide the several elements between the three, so that they form one whole each day; rather the whole must find expression in the central act, viz. the Eucharist, with Mattins and Evensong not monotonously repeating but at least expanding and commenting on what is presented in the Eucharist. To give a musical parallel: the main theme is given in the Eucharist, and Mattins and Evensong provide the counterpoint. We shall consider below how this may be achieved after the third strand in the celebrations, viz. the additional devotions, has been examined.

To place these additional devotions on the same level as the sacramental action is obviously wrong, as has been recognized by the Roman reformers;<sup>1</sup> but it would be overhasty to go to the opposite extreme and regard each and every one as valueless. Nevertheless whatever is retained must be justified on the grounds that it meets a general need and is connected with the liturgical centre. It seems scarcely necessary to argue for a blessing of palms and a procession on Palm Sunday; nor need it be stressed that the former should be simple with the main emphasis on the latter and that the reformed Roman practice of pro-

<sup>1</sup> Gaillard, *art. cit.*, p. 69.

cessing from the church hall has much to be said for it. This observance certainly answers to a popular demand, admirably expresses the theme of the day and leads quite naturally into the succeeding Eucharist.

On Maundy Thursday the Eucharist could well be celebrated in the evening and might be followed by a meal or agape, corresponding to the loving cup at Salisbury. Evensong would then take place, leading into the stripping of the altars and the gradual extinction of the lights, which would thus balance the ceremonial illumination on Easter Eve.<sup>1</sup> On Good Friday there is much to be said for a general communion, but since a celebration without communion is, in Anglican eyes, not readily to be accepted, conversely a communion without a celebration may be deemed to be questionable. Hence a full celebration on Good Friday would seem to be the answer, thus enabling the Church to "proclaim the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11: 26).<sup>2</sup> The Veneration of the Cross is undoubtedly a moving symbolic action and could be integrated with the Eucharist by having it unveiled during the Gospel at the words: "there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene" (John 19: 25). The members of the congregation would bow their heads in silence for a brief moment, and the Gospel would then be concluded. The Easter Sepulchre, or Easter Garden as it is now frequently called, would seem to have a close parallel in use with the Christmas Crib, such a common feature in our churches today. To go in procession to the garden after the Eucharist, to place inside the tomb one of the palm crosses from the preceding Sunday and to close it, would be an effective symbolic recalling of the final event on Good Friday.

On Holy Saturday night the blessing of the new fire and the Paschal Candle and the procession into the darkened church are all meaningful actions which have lost nothing with the passage of time. The head of the procession could make its way to the sanctuary via the Easter Garden for the rolling away of the stone. Evensong could well be replaced by the four lessons and succeeding prayers. If possible a baptism should follow; then the renewal of the baptismal vows by all present and the climax would be the Eucharist corresponding to the midnight mass on Christmas Eve.

<sup>1</sup> Since the Maundy presupposes first-century Middle Eastern habits, it is perhaps no longer very edifying and is therefore omitted.

<sup>2</sup> For fuller arguments in favour of this see Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 32 ff.; B. Capelle, "L'Office du vendredi saint", *Maison-Dieu*, 41, 1955, p. 83; J. A. T. Robinson, *Liturgy Coming to Life*, 1960, pp. 48-51.

It remains to outline the relation of the Eucharist with Mattins and Evensong and with these additional devotions throughout Holy Week so that it may be seen as a progressive but integrated whole. In formulating this rationale two assumptions have been made: (1) that Mattins will normally preface the Eucharist, except on Maundy Thursday, and (2) that the Eucharist itself will have been revised and will therefore contain, in addition to the Epistle and Gospel, an Old Testament lection and a Psalm.<sup>1</sup>

In the appointed Psalm (62)<sup>2</sup> at Mattins on Palm Sunday, Christ expresses His confidence in God despite the afflictions He is shortly to endure, and, with Christ, the Church declares its trust in God as it prepares to die with Christ that it may rise with Him. The Old Testament lesson (Exod. 11), recording the last of the plagues before the deliverance from bondage, speaks of the death of the Egyptian first-born, even as Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is to die and be the firstborn of the dead, bringing deliverance from the bondage of sin. That death casts its shadow before in the reading of Matt. 26, the first half of his Passion narrative. At the blessing of the palms, which takes place immediately after Mattins, in the church hall, Matt. 21: 1-11 is read, which describes the triumphal entry, in imitation of which the congregation processes to the church. So the redemption is under way; God is coming to die for Israel, but that death will issue in final triumph, as symbolized by the palms of victory. In thus imitating Christ, the faithful enter the church as into Jerusalem, but the church building is also a figure of the heavenly Jerusalem, and hence they look forward to the final consummation.

At the Eucharist the Old Testament lesson continues the theme of the entry with Zechariah's prophecy of the coming of the messianic king to Jerusalem (9: 9-12), but the Psalm, *De profundis* (130), tells of the cost of redemption, as the Epistle (Phil. 2: 5-11) speaks of the humiliation involved, and the Gospel (Matt. 27) sets it out in detail. At Evensong, the appointed Psalm (22) anticipates the historical incidents of the Passion: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? . . . they pierced my hands and my feet . . . they parted my garments among them"; while the Old Testament lesson speaks of the suffering servant who is to be "despised and rejected of men" (Isa. 52: 13—53: 12). Yet

<sup>1</sup> G. Cope, J. G. Davies and D. Tytler, *An Experimental Liturgy*, 1958, pp. 8 f.; 61 f.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix for details of the suggested lectionary upon which this rationale is based.

from this death life is to come, and so the New Testament passage re-echoes the triumphant note of the morning with the Johannine account of the entry (12: 1-19)—“these things understood not his disciples at first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him” (v. 16).

In the words of Ps. 25, at Mattins on Monday, Christ prays for help in affliction: “O my God, in thee have I trusted, let me not be ashamed; let not mine enemies triumph over me.” For He is to bear the sin of Israel, so bitterly detailed in Hos. 13: 1-14; but He will do so in confidence: “I will ransom thee from the power of the grave; I will redeem thee from death: O death, where are thy plagues? O grave, where is thy destruction?” (v. 14). So His followers are not to be borne down by their sorrow, since He is going to prepare a place for them “that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14: 1-14). The confident reference to impending suffering is continued in the Old Testament lesson at the Eucharist (Isa. 50: 5-10): “Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me?” Next the historical connexion of the day is interwoven with the over-all theme: Ps. 24 sings of the coming of the King of Glory to His temple and that temple is both the one at Jerusalem, which He forthwith cleanses (Mark 11: 15-18), and the temple of His body, the Church (2 Cor. 6: 14-18) which is to continue His saving work and manifest His light amidst the darkness of the world. In the evening the plea for help in suffering is repeated in Ps. 28, while the historical reference is begun in Mal. 3: 1-6, which tells of the Lord suddenly coming to His temple and receives its fulfilment in John 2: 13-22, which repeats the story of the cleansing and also looks forward: “He spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he spake this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had said.”

On Tuesday, at Mattins, Ps. 31 reaffirms confidence in the divine aid—“In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed”—since Christ, in the role of the suffering servant (Isa. 42: 1-9), is to be “for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon”. There follows a warning that we must tread the same path; we are told the cost of discipleship, but assured of help through the bestowal of the Spirit (John 16: 1-15). At the Eucharist the prophet Jeremiah comes before us as a type of the servant who is “like a gentle lamb that is led to the slaughter” (Jer. 11: 18-20), and cries out, Ps. 13, for help. Help

is assured, but it is help to persevere amidst the suffering that the Christian must share with his Lord; so in 2 Cor. 11: 23-31 the costly labours of a faithful follower are listed. The Gospel (Matt. 24: 3-26) brings us back from the unitive theme to the historical note, since it comprises Jesus' discourse on the Mount of Olives, in which He gives counsel to His disciples and declares that "he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved". At Evensong the unitive theme again predominates; the Psalm, 88, is a prayer for help in affliction; the Old Testament lesson (Wis. 2: 1, 12-end) describes how the wicked combine against the righteous man, and Acts 2: 22-36 recounts the crucifixion and exaltation of Him whom God has made "both Lord and Christ".

The leading theme of Wednesday at Mattins and the Eucharist is the impending Passion, but it is faced in quiet confidence in the words of Ps. 42: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God . . . my tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?" It is in this spirit of ardent longing to accomplish the divine will that Christ, and with Him the Church, approaches nearer to the day of redemption, which itself will fulfil the Old Testament Day of Atonement prescribed in Lev. 16: 2-24; so the New Testament lection (Luke 22) begins with the words: "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover", and the first part of the Lucan passion follows. So the Christ goes to tread the winepress of the wrath of God: "in all their affliction he was afflicted . . . in his love and in his mercy he redeemed them" (Isa. 63: 1-12). This Old Testament lesson at the Eucharist leads into Ps. 54, which voices the human anxiety of Jesus: "Save me, O God, by thy name, and judge me in thy might. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth. For strangers have risen up against me, and violent men have sought after my soul." But this is the necessary destiny of Him who is to be the mediator of the new covenant and is to enter into the holy place not made with hands to appear before the face of God for us; He must seal with His shed blood the pact between God and man (Heb. 9: 16-end). This outpouring of Jesus' life is the subject of Luke 23 which continues and completes the Lucan Passion begun at Mattins. At Evensong the historical note is sounded once more, to bring home to us that we are living with Jesus through His last days on earth. This is the night when Judas arranged to betray his master, and so the Psalm, 41, speaks of "mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his

heel against me". In vain does Christ, as it were, seek to dissuade His betrayer, and all who would imitate him, in the words of Prov. 1: 10-19: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, Come with us, let us wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause." And so the compact between the chief priest and the defaulting disciple is made and described by the reading of Matt. 26: 1-5, 14-16.

The recurring pattern of Mattins prefacing the Eucharist, and then Evensong, which has continued without a break, except for the Palm Sunday procession, now changes and further devotions are added as Holy Week increases its tempo and nears its climax. The all but intolerable burden carried by Jesus during these last days is reproduced for and in the Church by the greater number of devotional activities in which it is called to join. On Maundy Thursday, Mattins stands alone, the Eucharist being celebrated in the evening. Its appointed Psalm is yet another prayer on the lips of Christ (64): "Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint: preserve my life from fear of the enemy." Yet there is here no self-interest; the Saviour laments not for Himself, but for Jerusalem, the earthly city, which rejects Him; but His self-identification with the sinner enables Him to say: "Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me" (Lam. 1: 1-14). Here is supreme love, since, from the New Testament lesson, "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15).

The evening Eucharist vividly recalls the Last Supper, and so the Old Testament lesson prophesies the new covenant (Jer. 31: 31-4), which is to be ratified on Calvary, while the Psalm, 116, speaks of the divine deliverance and of taking the cup of salvation. The Epistle is the Pauline account of the institution (1 Cor. 11: 20-32), and the Gospel is the Johannine parallel in the story of the Pedilavium (John 13: 1-15). In this celebration joy and sorrow are mingled together. "It is a day of joy because God gives himself to man on it, and a day of sorrow because God has to be murdered that man might receive the gift. Today the Church recalls both aspects of the tradition, in joy and sorrow. She celebrates 'the day of the tradition', the consecrated day on which our Lord was handed over, and on which he handed on the mystery rite of his body and blood."<sup>1</sup> Hence the ensuing agape, the simple fellowship meal, expresses the quiet joy and confidence of the Church, but, as Evensong opens, the Psalm, 109, recounts the cost of that joy: "they

<sup>1</sup> A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 1958, p. 89.

have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love . . . I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down like the locust". Similarly in the Old Testament lesson: "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me and caused me to walk in darkness and not in light" . . . , nevertheless "the Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him" (Lam. 3: 1-33). The reality of the suffering and the readiness to accept it, the agony in the garden and the prayer that God's will be done—these are given expression in poignant words. But the supper is over, "and straightway, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and elders", and the Marcan narrative (14: 34-72) leads us through the night hours to cock-crow and Peter's denial. The stripping of the altars and the gradual extinction of the lights give visible expression to the desolation and to the closing in of the powers of darkness.

On Good Friday Mattins, leading directly in to the first part of the Eucharist up to the offertory, corresponds to the ancient Synaxis, Ps. 69, which is an extended plea for salvation, aptly expresses both the mind of Jesus in His historical situation and the desire of His followers today. But lest the unitive aspect of the festival be forgotten and *Good Friday* not be seen to deserve its name, the Psalm is followed by Hos. 6: 1-6, originally the first of the Old Testament lections at the Salisbury Mass of the Pre-Sanctified, which affirms: "After two days will he revive us: on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him." Christians are united sacramentally with Christ not only in His death but also in His resurrection. The New Testament (John 18: 28-end) takes up the story of the Passion at the point where it was interrupted the previous evening, when reading the Marcan account, i.e. immediately after Peter's denial. At the Eucharist Psalm 22, already used at the beginning of Holy Week at Evensong on Palm Sunday, details the sufferings of Christ who is the true Paschal lamb. Hence the Old Testament lesson is Exod. 12: 1-11 which gives the directions for the ancient passover ritual, fulfilled in Christ as the Epistle (Heb. 10: 1-25) makes clear; so the continuation of the Johannine Passion (19: 1-37) describes the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. During the reading of this Gospel, at v. 25, as already suggested, the processional cross is brought before the congregation, its veil removed, and all bow their heads in silent veneration, being joined across the centuries with Mary and John and the little group at the foot of the cross. At the en-

suing communion, the Church is identified with its Head, as it feeds on the bread which is His body given for us and drinks the wine which is His blood shed for many unto the remission of sins.

After the celebration, a procession goes to the Easter garden, and during the reading of the account of Jesus' burial (Mark 15: 42-47), one of the palm crosses is placed within the sepulchre and it is closed. At Evensong this same last event, coupled with faith in the resurrection, is brought to the fore. Ps. 40 opens with the words: "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay; and he set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." Isa. 26: 17-20 contains the resurrection imagery of childbirth, and continues: "Thy dead shall live; my dead body shall arise. . . . Come, my people, enter thou into thy chamber, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." It was, we recall, "when the doors were shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews" (John 20: 19) that the risen Jesus was to come unto His own. But first there was the rest in the tomb, and the burial is commemorated by the reading of John 19: 38-end.<sup>1</sup>

The opening act of worship on Holy Saturday consists of Mattins and the first part of the Eucharist, forming together one long Synaxis. Ps. 23 needs no exegesis: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." The Old Testament lesson, Isa. 14: 5-14, is, however, less familiar. It tells of the descent to the place of departed spirits of the proud and oppressive king of Babylon; he himself may be taken as a type of the anti-Christ who in turn per-

<sup>1</sup> It will be noted that no provision is made for a Three Hours; a service which apparently began in Peru at the end of the seventeenth century, being introduced by Fr. Alonso Messia at Lima (Thurston, *op. cit.*, pp. 369-403). The reasons for omitting this observance are both practical and liturgical. From the practical point of view, it has to be acknowledged that very few preachers indeed are capable of conducting a really valuable meditation for three hours, and moreover it is unrealistic to expect members of a congregation, if they have attended the main sacramental service of the day, to be present for yet another extended act of devotion. From the liturgical point of view, the emphasis of all the services is on their corporate nature, and since Good Friday is in many places a working-day and a Three Hours can only be attended by a minority, there seems little point in cutting across the corporate aspect by providing for the piety of a small section. Finally, the centre of the observances is the sacrament and the Three Hours, not belonging to this category, is not a satisfactory alternative. Similar objections may be brought against the so-called liturgical Three Hours consisting of Mattins, Litany, Ante-Communion and Evensong, with sermons.

versely mirrors the activities of Christ Himself; hence to Christ we can apply the words: "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth." This descent to hell, or more accurately to the place of departed spirits, finds New Testament expression in 1 Peter 3: 17-end: "he went and preached to the spirits in prison". But this passage is all the more apt since it speaks of baptism through which the believer dies and rises with Christ. The lections at the Ante-Communion repeat, with variations, these same themes: Ps. 30 "O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from Sheol"; Dan. 12: 1-4 "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awaken"; 1 Peter 4: 1-6 "unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead"; while the Gospel, Matt. 27: 62-6, originally read on this day at Jerusalem, tells of the guard being placed at the sepulchre.

The historical note of the day, the rest in the tomb, having been sounded in the morning office, we turn to the Paschal Vigil which culminates in the midnight mass of Easter Day, and here the dominant theme is not the commemoration of the anniversary of Jesus' resurrection but the mystery of His passage from death to the life of glory, a passage that, as previously noted, has its analogies in the passing of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land and in the passing of the Christians from sin to participation in the resurrection of life.

"This is the great night of the *mysterium*, the night that is to give birth to new life. For the unbaptized it brings initiation; for the baptized, renewal; for the penitents a call back to life already possessed."<sup>1</sup> This is the night of new creation, so that as God in the ancient myth said: Let there be light! now light once more is the sign of His activity. Hence the congregation assembles in the porch where, after the blessing of the new fire, a secondary element which should be brief, the Paschal Candle is blessed and lit, and the candles of the individual worshippers also, for the procession into the darkened church. Now the light of the resurrection of Him who is the light of the world sheds its brilliance in advance. The head of the procession moves to the Easter Garden for the rolling away of the stone and then continues into the sanctuary, and one of the ministers ascends the pulpit for the Easter Proclamation: "This is the paschal feast when the very Lamb is slain . . . this is the night wherein of old thou didst lead forth our fathers, the children of Israel out of Egypt . . . this is the night which by the light of a fiery pillar hath purged away the dark state of sin . . . this is the night

<sup>1</sup> Löhr, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

wherein the bands of death were loosed, and Christ rose again from the grave in triumph.”<sup>1</sup>

There follow the four lessons or Prophecies, each presenting a facet of the new life in Christ: Gen. 1: 1—2: 2 is the narrative of creation now renewed in Christ; Exod. 14: 24—15: 1a with the succeeding canticle, Exod. 15: 1b-3, tells of the overthrow of the Egyptian host as Christ has triumphed over the powers of evil and enables us now to share in His victory; Isa. 4: 2-6, with canticle Isa. 5: 1, 2a, speaks of the washing away of the filth of the daughters of Jerusalem that they may be holy, and Deut. 31: 22-end, followed by 32: 1-4, God’s final speech to Moses, warns against backsliding and evil-doing that might issue in the breaking of the covenant.

The baptism that should ideally follow<sup>2</sup> presents the sacramental realization of union with Christ: “we were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6: 4). While the succeeding renewal of the baptismal promises is not theologically necessary, since the Eucharist is the sacramental means of that renewal,<sup>3</sup> there is no doubt that it serves to make this explicit and is an effective act of witness. So the congregation renews its adherence to Christ<sup>4</sup> and is thus prepared for the Midnight Mass at which it is united with Christ in His death and resurrection. Here is the climax of Holy Week, the point to which all the previous acts of worship and devotion have been leading. Now the Church feasts with Him after His resurrection.<sup>5</sup> Christ is risen! “For our pass-over also hath been sacrificed, even Christ: wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Cor. 5: 7, 8).

<sup>1</sup> For text see Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 56 f.

<sup>2</sup> There is much to be said for reviving the ancient English practice of reserving children born at this season for baptism on Holy Saturday night.

<sup>3</sup> J. G. Davies, *The Spirit, the Church and the Sacraments*, 1954, pp. 182 f.

<sup>4</sup> It is at this point in the reformed Roman rite that the candles carried by the members of the congregation are extinguished.

<sup>5</sup> Cullmann has emphasized the extent to which the resurrection appearances are associated with meals (O. Cullmann and J. Leenhardt, *Essays on the Lord’s Supper*, 1958, pp. 8-16).

## APPENDIX

### A LECTORY FOR HOLY WEEK

IN COMPILING THIS lectionary I have not sought to make changes for the sake of making changes and have therefore used largely traditional and well-tried material. Perhaps the most noticeable alteration is the omission of the Marcan Passion narrative on the Tuesday morning; this, however, is but a return to the earliest practice, and in any case part of it is read at Evensong on Maundy Thursday and the remainder of it is mainly incorporated in Matthew and Luke.

The sources are as follows: (a) Jerusalem. (b) Sarum. (c) 1662 Book of Common Prayer. (d) 1955 Church of England Lectionary. (e) Church of South India. (f) 1960 order of psalms approved by the Convocation of Canterbury. (g) New proposals.

#### MATTINS

#### EUCHARIST

#### EVENSONG

##### *Palm Sunday*

Ps. 62 (d)	Palm lection: Matt.	Ps. 22 (f)
O.T. Exod. 11 (d)	21: 1-11 (a)	O.T. Isa. 52: 13-53: 12 (d)
N.T. Matt. 26 (d)	O.T. Zech. 9: 9-12 (e)	N.T. John 12: 1-19 (g-b at mass)
	Ps. 130 (d evening)	
	Ep. Phil. 2: 5-11 (b)	
	Gos. Matt. 27 (c)	

##### *Monday*

Ps. 25 (d)	O.T. Isa. 50: 5-10 (b)	Ps. 28 (d)
O.T. Hos. 13: 1-14 (d)	Ps. 24 (g)	O.T. Mal 3: 1-6 (g)
N.T. John 14: 1-14 (d)	Ep. 2 Cor. 6: 14-18 (g)	N.T. John 2: 13-22 (g)
	Gos. Mark 11: 15-18 (g)	

##### *Tuesday*

Ps. 31 (d)	O.T. Jer. 11: 18-20 (c)	Ps. 88 (d)
O.T. Isa. 42: 1-19 (d)	Ps. 13 (g)	O.T. Wis. 2: 1, 12-end (d)
N.T. John 16: 1-15 (d on Wed. morning)	Ep. 2 Cor. 11: 23-31 (g)	N.T. Acts 2: 22-36 (g)
	Gos. Matt. 24: 3-26 (g)	

## APPENDIX

*Wednesday*

Ps. 42 (d)	O.T. Isa. 63: 1-12 (b)	Ps. 41 (d morning)
O.T. Lev. 16: 2-24 (d evening)	Ep. Heb. 9: 16-end (c)	O.T. Prov. 1: 10-19 (a)
N.T. Luke 22 (c Wed. Euch.)	Gos. Luke 23 (c Thurs. Euch.)	N.T. Matt. 26: 1-5, 14-16 (g)

*Thursday*

Ps. 64 (d)	O.T. Jer. 31: 31-4 (e)	Ps. 109 (d)
O.T. Lam. 1: 1-14 (d)	Ps. 116 (g)	O.T. Lam. 3: 1-33 (d)
N.T. John 15 (g)	Ep. 1 Cor. 11: 20-32 (b)	N.T. Mark 14: 43-72 (g)

*Friday*

Ps. 69 (d evening)	O.T. Exod. 12: 1-11 (b)	Ps. 40 (f)
O.T. Hos. 6: 1-6 (b mass)	Ps. 22 (d morning)	O.T. Isa. 26: 17-20 (g)
N.T. John 18: 28-end (part of d)	Ep. Heb. 10: 1-25 (c) Gos. John 19: 1-37 (b) Easter-Garden: Mark 15: 42-7 (g)	N.T. John 19: 38-end (d)

*Saturday*

Ps. 23 (d)	O.T. Dan. 12: 1-4 (e)	VIGIL
O.T. Isa. 14: 5-14 (g)	Ps. 30 (d morning)	Prophecies:
N.T. 1 Peter 3: 17- end (c Ep.)	Ep. 1 Peter 4: 1-6 (g)	Gen. 1: 1-2: 2
	Gos. Matt 27: 62-6 (a)	Exod. 14: 24-15: 1a
		Isa. 4: 2-6
		Deut. 31: 22-end

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